

# **ANOTHER GARLAND**

**(Biographical Dictionary of  
Carnatic Composers & Musicians)  
(Book II)**

By  
**N. RAJAGOPALAN, I.A.S. (Rtd.)**  
(with an article by Dr.(Prof.) B. Ramamurthi)

**1992**

**CARNATIC CLASSICALS**

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'In 1990 N. Rajagopalan created history by publishing the first volume 'A Garland' ... it is a thesaurus containing the critical accounts of over 100 artistes. It surpassed all the earlier works of a similar nature by comprehensiveness, analytical approach and musical insight... *Another Garland* will be 'Another Bonanza' to the music world and it is now its duty to salute him for his dedication and perseverance.'

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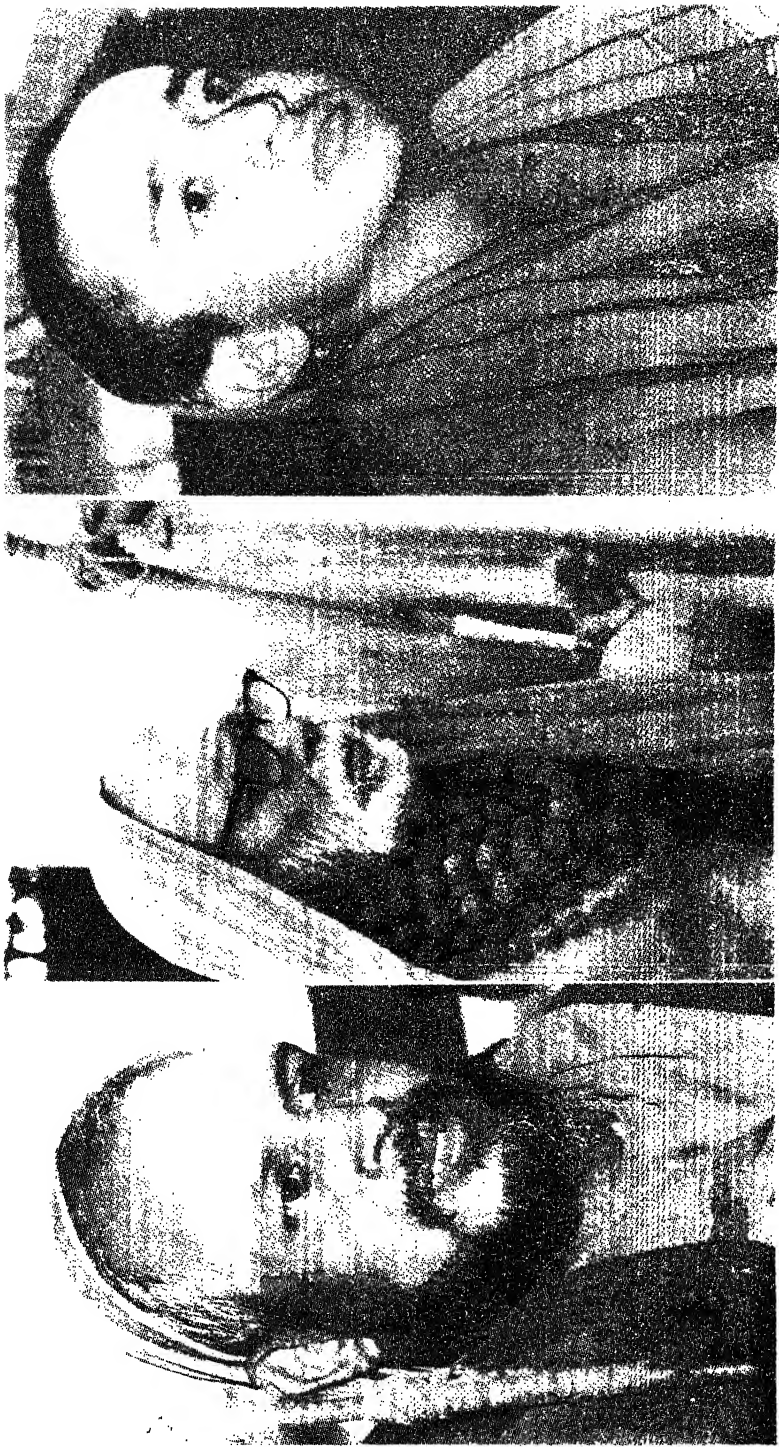
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**THE SANKARACHARYAS OF KANCHI — KAMAKOTI MUTT**

H. H. Sri Jayendra Saraswati, H. H. Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati and H.H. Sri Vijayendra Saraswati

ஸ்ரீசந்திர மௌளீச்வராய நம :

**ஸ்ரீ காஞ்சி காமகோடி பீடாதிபதி ஜகத்குரு  
ஸ்ரீ சங்கராச்சார்ய ஸ்வாமிகள் ஸ்ரீ மடம்  
ஸமஸ்தானம், காஞ்சீபுரம்.**

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ஸாம வேதத்தின் உபவேதமாக விளங்கும் காந்தர்வ வேதமாம் ஸங்கீதத்தை அப்யாஸிப்பதிலும் ஸம்ரக்சிப்பதிலும் வாழ்க்கையை அர்ப்பணித்து இறைவனை மகிழ்வித்ததுடன் இவ்வுலக வாழ்க்கையை இன்ப மயமாக்கிக் காட்டியுள்ள - காட்டி வருகின்ற பலரது வாழ்க்கை - திறமை முதலியன பற்றிய செய்திகளைத் திரட்டிச் சுருக்கி " மாலை " என்ற பெயரில் பெரும் நூலாகத் தந்து உதவியுள்ள ஸ்ரீ ராஜகோபாலன் இப்பொழுது " மற்றொரு மாலை " என்ற பெயரில் சுமார் 300 க்குமதிகமான நபர்களைப் பற்றிய விவரங்களைத் தொகுத்தளிப்பது அறிந்து மகிழ்கிறோம்.

மாலைக்குக் கிடைத்து வருவது போன்றே மற்றொரு மாலைக்கும் ஸங்கீத வித்வான்கள் - ரசிகர்கள் - மாணவர்கள் ஆகியோரிடையே மாபெரும் வரவேற்பு கிட்டவும் ஆசிரியருக்கு ஸகல நன்மைகளும் கிட்டவும் நாத சொரூபினியான அன்னை பரதேவதையின் அருள் கிட்ட ஆசீர்வதிக்கிறோம்.

**நாராயண ஸ்ம்ருதி.**

## FOREWORD

A galaxy of composers, musicians, musicologists and hymnodists have played a vital and impressive part in the evolution and development of the science and art of our Carnatic music - from Bharata, Narada and Illango to Ravi Kiran, U. Srinivas and Shashank. Magnificent artistes like Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar, Tanjore Quartette, Arunachala Kavirayar, Gopala Krishna Bharati, Uthukadu Venkatasubba Ayyar, Papanasam Sivan, Vina Balachander, S.G. Kittappa and K.B. Sundarambal and the happily present vidwans like Semmangudi Dr. Srinivasa Ayyar, Dr. M.S. Subbulakshmi, Smt. D.K. Pattammal, Dr. Balamurali Krishna, Shri. Lalgudi Jayaraman and Prof. T.N. Krishnan have all played a highly distinguished part.

Shri. N. Rajagopalan has the credit of bringing out the first-ever gargantuan Biographical Dictionary of Carnatic Composers and Musicians in English titled 'A Garland' in 1990 presenting exhaustive accounts of the lives of over seven hundred artistes. I find that it has been very well received and excellently reviewed by competent authorities. The author is following it up with his second book titled appropriately as 'Another Garland' containing over 350 lives. The two 'Garlands' thus cover well over a thousand lives, a formidable number indeed!

The author, in his Preface, recalls the memorable words of Ben Johnson -

'For, where his person liv'd scarce one just age,  
And that, 'midst envy and parts; then fell by rage;  
His dream too dying.

But in books ...

To all future time, not only doth restore  
His life, but makes that he can die no more.'

The truth of the statement could not be better illustrated than by a Biographical Dictionary giving succinct accounts of the noble side of the lives of the devotees of *Nada Yoga* and *Nadopasana*. The articles in Part I of the Book and the notes in Part III present a wealth of information. Chronological table, definitions and index make it a complete source book of reference, a ready reckoner and a book of treasure. I congratulate the author for the immense labour and expense he has put in and for presenting this treasure for the reference of musicians, music-lovers, teachers, students and researchers. I am happy to commend this *Another Garland* to the musical fraternity.

Madras -1.  
April 28, 1992.

M. GOPALAKRISHNAN  
Chairman and Managing Director,  
Indian Bank.

# VOICE OF DIVINITY

## MUSIC: A SPIRITUAL AID

(H.H. Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati, Paramacharyal, Kanchi Kamakoti Sankaracharya Mutt, Kanchipuram has given expression to the following golden observations in his lectures, some of which are brought out by Vanathi Padippagam in the admirable and soulful book '*Deivathin Kural*' in tamil.)

- i. Appar, the Saivite canonized saint, has compared Divine Presence to -

Flawless Veena rendition	Flush of autumn bloom and
Exhilarant evening full moon	Lotus-studded pond with bees humming around.
Rejuvenating southerly breeze	

The point here is the pre-eminent position given by Appar to good veena play. The Paramacharyal reminds us all of the spiritual message and benefits of chaste music rendition. Appar's hymn reads:

*'Māçil veenaiyum. mālai madhiyamum  
Veesu thendralum veengiṭā vēnilum  
Moosu vandāraip poigaiyum pōndradhē  
Eēsan Endai Enayadi nizhaṭē.'*

- ii. Sage Yagnavalkya, who gave *Dharma Sastra*, says that '*Nadopasana*' through blemishless veena play ensuring purity of sruti and accuracy of laya leads the devotee along the sure path of Salvation even without

Dhyana,	Tapas and
Yoga,	Poojah.

*'Veenā Vādana Thathvagnah çruti jāthi viçaratah* I  
*Thālakagnascha prayatnēna mōkshamārgē sa gacchati.'* II

- iii. In his '*Soundarya Lahari*', Adi Sankaracharya describes how the musical scales – Sadjā gramam, Madhyama gramam and Gandhara gramam – have their origin in the neck of the Goddess. (Sloka '*Gale rekha, thisre...*')  
iv. The Goddess of Learning, Devi Saraswati is the source of veena play. Poet Kalidasa, in his '*Navaratnamala*', brings to notice that Goddess Parasakti too plays on veena and gets lost in the seven swaras - thus becoming the Symbol of Tranquility and Gracious Heart:

*'Sarigamapadani ratām tām  
Veena sankrānta kānta hastāntām.'*  
*'Sāntam mrudula swāntam  
Kuṇçābharatāntām namāmi sivakāntām.'*

The soul of the devotee who prays with chaste music is blessed by the Goddess. The individual soul merges in the Universal Soul, the Paramatma.

## PREFACE

I COMMENCED the *yagna* of bringing out the first-ever, gargantuan Biographical Dictionary of Carnatic Composers, Vocalists, Instrumentalists, Musicologists and Hymnodists in the month of Margasirsha (Dhanus), extolled as the chosen month of God, December 1987. The first book titled '*A Garland*' was graciously released by H.H. the Sankaracharya of Kanchi-Kamakoti Peetam, Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swamigal, as a Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan publication on June 19, 1990, the first copy being received by Sri Haridhos Giri Swamigal, perhaps the lone crusading Bhagavata Maha Purusha now. It covers the lives of over seven hundred artistes both of the illustrious past and the memorable present. It has been acclaimed as a definitive source book of reference, a monumental dictionary, a ready-reckoner and an unparalleled treasure. Excerpts of the reviews find a place in Part III F of this book. Since the first book could not naturally cover the galaxy in entirety, this second book titled '*Another Garland*' is presented (to be followed by '*Yet Another Garland*' in due course since quite a number of artistes do not find time to give details ).

Classical Carnatic music is but the continuance of ancient Indian music as it was prior to the advent of Persian influence and the attendant evolution of the Hindustani style. The tamil areas in the South had from pre-historic times a well-developed, scientific, distinct style known as *Pann*. The Indian (later called the '*Carnatic*' from the days of the work *Manasollasa*) and the Tamil *Pann* had coalesced invisibly during the middle ages and presently the South has the Carnatic music and the North has the Hindustani music - of course, both raga-based with common and distinct features. The Garland Series brings to focus the illustrious lives of artistes expounding the Carnatic style.

Classical music in India has fundamentally been the handmaid of spiritual savants and apostles for self-realisation and propagation of spiritual message. Though for some music may be professional, it has continued to be subordinated to the primary, ambrosial objective of spiritual enlightenment and advancement. 'Our ancients realised (the power of music) almost at the very dawn of our history... soon found that the Gods were more easily gratified by the singing of the poetic hymns called *Riks* and they produced the *Sama Veda*... Bharata says that Brahma extracted the art and science of music from *Sama Veda*. (Dr. V. Raghavan). If classical music is *Nada Upasana* for the yogi in musician, it is solace and soulful joy (*brahmananda*) both to the initiated and the lay. Fortunately education or training is no pre-requisite to surrender one's soul to melody. Aanaaya Nayanar's enchanting life (page 274 in *A Garland*) is an apt and ideal illustration and consummation of the magic lure and ennobling spell of melody.

Till the demise of the Second World War, the average Indian was basically wedded to spiritual endeavours to the neglect of materialistic pursuits and profit. The marriage of Man and Art was complete and harmonious and music flourished in a salubrious climate. The classical prospered with the folk music side by side both being patronised by royalty, landed aristocracy and temples. All the air, the aroma of music held benevolent sway. In fact, music was *prasada* to one and all, high and low, copiously distributed irrespective of caste, creed or race as music was free for all like air and water. Temples reverberated with vocal and instrumental music daily. Dramas, concerts and dances were in the open dishing out classical music in plenty and continuously to reach every man at his home and street ! Whether it be Ekadashi or Sivaratri, Rama Navami or Krishna Jayanti, marriage or funeral, success or defeat, music was made with foresight *sine qua non*. No nation or art can sustain itself nor can it flourish with dwarfs with a mere one or two of tall stature. Galaxy of giants appeared on the scene from time to time to rejuvenate the art and reorient the science - *Vide* the chronological table in Part IV. National genius presented successive waves of illustrious breeds of composers, musicians and musicologists who kept the musical fire and flame bright. The endeavour and vocation constituted a multi-dimensional effort to inculcate spiritual values, enlighten people, spread art and culture and incidentally provide occupation and entertainment nearer home. In fact the scheme of founding temples had the same profound socio-economic-cultural bias in India. That was the underlying concept of Village Swaraj pure and simple. Temples were the fulcra around which the lives of the people revolved. The environment was so sublime and all-pervasive that even a fanatic Aurangzeb could hardly find any means of avoiding and averting music and could not find the royal writ, place or the means to bury it. That was the prime reason for the monstrous intensity of his rage. There were fields of hereditary specialisation and implied division of labour as in the cases of hymnodists (odhuvars), nagaswara artistes and dancers. **It is significant that renowned composers and musicians came up like the sixty-three Saivite Apostles (Nayanmars) from among the different strata of society since music was intrinsically a communal asset all along and free for all.** That was Bharath, the Dharmabhoomi, the Mokshabhoomi wherein people from Nandanar to Narada flourished.

The reducing tempo of services and festivals at temples during the last four decades, the invasion and onslaught of mike-based cheap music, the migration of artistes to crowded urban centres and concentration of all musical endeavours in a few metropolitan centres robbed and deprived the millions in the vast slumbering rural tracts of all exposure to classical music leaving them musical agnostics. The shifting of music from temples and dramas from street corners and river beds to sabhas and chambers stifled the growth of classical music. Classical music can flourish in its native charm, grandeur and glory only in an atmosphere of *vicranti* and not in the polluted, dusty turmoil of noisy towns and cities. **The latter can hope to nourish it for a while but not nurse it**

**through.** As it is with grains and primary products, the city can consume but not hope to create music. Classical music based on improvisation has no future unless the imbalance is remedied and the rural reorientation is soon accomplished. George Ade said with rustic humour —

'In the city, a funeral is just an interruption of traffic;  
but in the country, it is a form of entertainment.'

Even so, rural India certainly provides the appropriate environment and atmosphere needed and the psychological and emotional, mental and moral influences for inculcating and imbibing music. The ultimate marketing may be in urban and rural centres but **training and apprenticeship should be rural-oriented.**

To subserve this, corporate aids and scholarships are to be canalised to restore to rural areas their legitimate share of music schools, concerts, fairs and festivals. Temples should play their part as before and youth associations should distribute their services and concerts among rural centres. Urban monopoly, urban-oriented artistes with one leg in music and another in jobs and casuals can never sustain the soul of the art for long. The tragedy of sickness overtaking the ambrosial, divine classical art has to be averted.

As stated above, rulers and landed aristocracy vied with each other in their patronage of composers and musicians and the cyclical patronage of royal courts at Vijayanagar, Tanjore, Trivandrum, Pudukottai, Mysore, Ettayapuram, etc., is worthy of being written in letters of gold. Temples provided the basic stamina at grass roots to nagaswara artistes and hymnodists in general and other musicians at festivals. These lent name, fame and stature to the artistes without doubt. It is also an undeniable fact that most of the artistes lived strangers to material affluence. They forgot their pangs of poverty and pain of hunger in yogic pursuits in the realm of melody. As beautifully observed by M.S. Golwalker :

'India opted for the wealth of perfection, virtues and sublimity of the soul, which is real and abiding; and no wonder great heroes and monarchs have worshipped the dust of the feet of half-naked sanyasins who rose above selfish interests in the cause of humanity.'

The prime beneficiary, the Indian Society had the vision and nobility to glorify Eminence entrenched in Indigence and raised to immortality the dichotomy of nebulous earthly existence and weighty contributions in art, science and literature and their coparcenary. The torch-bearers of Classical music took pride in such a paradoxical existence ; and unselfish *nadopasana* took music not only to the temple *prakaras* and bhajan mandals quantitatively but also to the pinnacle of excellence and public acknowledgment as if in a *quid pro quo*. The position is not much different even now. A few musicians may, perhaps, revel in comparative prosperity; quite a number stand stopped at the portals of affluence while a vast majority have little access to it.

It is a tragic fact of life that luck, opportunity and patronage bless but a chosen few. Taking public life for comparison, Satyamurti, connoisseur, office-bearer of the Music Academy, Madras and the most remarkable parliamentarian was not destined to become a Chief Minister as hoped for. Sardar Patel shaped Independent India but was not chosen for conferment of Bharat Ratna till at last he was found fit forty-five years later by a minority government for posthumous honour! Lal Bahadur Sastri ascended the *gadi* but the cruel hand of Death sniffed out his life at the time of his glory on alien soil. How many V.I.Ps. visit his samadhi? That Simizhi Sundaram Ayyar, Mudicondan Venkatarama Ayyar and a host of others were side-lined is well-known. The *Garlands* shall accord them a true berth since, in the words of Ben Johnson, -

" For, where his person liv'd scarce one just age,  
And that, 'midst envy and parts; then fell by rage;  
His deeds too dying.

But in books ...

To all future time, not only doth restore  
His life, but makes that he can die no more."

Rulers and Aristocracy were not necessarily the standard-bearers of culture. In India, it was the saint, sage and the artiste, who 'rose above the mundane temptations of pelf and power' and dedicated their all to art, culture and society, that were the torch-bearers. The '*gurukulavasa*' scheme was born out of this lofty inspiring climate. It prospered here from before the days of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata till it was strangled in the recent past and with it went the unique blend of the sire-son relationship with the boon of the teacher-student nexus. At Kurukshetra, when Arjuna directed the first five arrows to the feet of Bhishma, the charioteer felt amused but the wise Bhishma exclaimed, 'My beloved Arjuna is prostrating before me with all his five *pranas* seeking my blessings'. Arjuna entertained the same respect to his preceptor Drona. Fortunately we have amidst us some elder musicians who had tasted the rigours and fruits of the now defunct system and it has been my earnest endeavour to bring their lives to record. The difficulty lies in getting the details since, in the words of Sir C.P. Ramaswami Ayyar, '**The self-imposed anonymity and self-effacement of Indian Art is one of the standing miracles of all times**'.

Some top musicians introduced novelties in presenting concerts during the Music Festival 1991-92 with orchestra as we have had brief spells of Rajarathinam with tambur and mridangam, Sarabha with tavil (of course, unavoidably), Kunnakudi Vaidyanathan and Mandolin Srinivas with tavil. A Bangalore artiste is reported to be giving Classical Carnatic music concerts to the beat of jazz percussion and jazz band! Of course, it may be argued that one worships the Lord Siva and not the cordon of demons (*boothaganas*), prostrates before the deity and not the palanquin-bearers and pays obeisance to the guru-saint and not those who fan him; and likewise the principal artiste and his contribution alone should count. But the quality and the strength of



accompanists do contribute much to the wealth of the music rendered, to the success or otherwise of the concert in bringing out the soul of music to elevate, ennoble and enlighten the audience. 'The despicable reed survives the storm as it sways with it but the mighty oak falls as it stands rigidly.' Classicism has a science, tradition and an image with consequential constraints and need to safeguard its purity and integrity. Orchestra may entertain but Classical music enlightens and elevates. How far the infiltration of orchestra could be countenanced is to be analysed to guard against the mighty oak falling down. Crude experiments may be injurious because of imitation and profit. A patient was emotionally shattered driven by the illusion of the nearby banyan tree crashing down on his head. To disabuse his mind, the tree was stealthily removed when he was under anaesthesia. Startled to see it absent on waking up, the poor man screamed, 'Lo ! you had fallen on my head and crushed it !' and died of shock. Let not noisy orchestra annihilate the mild and soft classical breed based on improvisation.

I solicit a reference to my preface to the first book (reproduced next). A glossary, chronological table of artistes, bibliography, definitions and an index to biographies in both the books find place in Part IV to assist musicians, music-lovers, students and researchers.

Part III-F carries an addenda and corrigenda to '*A Garland*' updating the details which **may be read as part of the first book**. They will be incorporated in the revised edition of Book I.

The period 1990-1992 has witnessed many renowned musicians bidding adieu to the stage of Classical Carnatic music. Dr. Semmangudi Srinivasa Ayyar, the senior-most Sangita Kalanidhi and veteran hailed as the 'Bhishma', announced his retirement in April 1992 after sixty-six eventful, record-breaking performing career. He commenced his career in 1926, one year earlier to the advent of the Music Academy, Madras and **perhaps he is the first great artiste who has announced his retirement!** Where is the question of retirement in politics and music? His announcement is without doubt historic! (I have a particular interest in this as he happens to be the 'son-in-law of my village', if the expression is permissible.) May the sage-counsel of the maestro continue to be available as his retirement is only as a performing artiste.

D.K. Jayaraman, a Sangita Kalanidhi, the soft prince among prominent musicians died unfortunately in January 1991 – just seventeen days after he was crowned at the Music Academy leaving scores of disciples and a vast assembly of admirers, 'whose pang is bitter, oft-times bitter, when they recollect his loss'. Dr. M.L. Vasanthakumari, another Sangita Kalanidhi and one of the performing Lady-Trinity, left on October 31, 1990 to be one of God's chorus celebrities and present Dasanjali for a change, leaving a large concourse of admiring and passionate disciples and well-meaning rasikas in India and abroad.

**" Fled is that music; do I wake or sleep ? "**

— (John Keats).

The cup of sorrow probably was not yet full ! Tragedy struck in the most heinous and lethal fashion killing Maharajapuram Santhanam, the reigning supremo among Carnatic vocalists in a road accident on June 24, 1992. The first Sangita Kalanidhi to be killed so, and the second vocalist after John Higgins, Santhanam held undisputed sway and leadership presenting enchanting lakshya-lakshana music to the delight of millions. Sure he would have been at the helm for the remaining part of this century and perhaps the first decade of the next. The supreme artiste demonstrated that Classical Carnatic music did attract gate-crashing crowds and, more particularly, the youth.

**" He is gone, who seem'd so great. — Gone;  
but nothing can bereave him of the fame he made his own. "**

Veena colossus, S. Balachander was the tallest of instrumentalists and he too passed away suddenly. Many others have left too leaving a void which time and nature alone should heal. The loss of all these veterans is too much to Art.

' They wear a truer crown  
Than any wreath that man can weave them.  
And in the vast bosom of Bharath leave them.  
God had accepted these eminent *Nadopasakas*  
To share the stage raised there for *Mahanubhavas*. '

( After Lord Tennyson )

Now, I DEDICATE this labour of love '*Another Garland*' to propagate the fragrant lives and achievements of Carnatic composers and musicians, to carve for myself a niche in the hearts of the Wise and the Learned and in pursuit of my own fulfilment'.

MADRAS.  
April 13, 1992.

— (With respects to Sarngadeva,  
author of *Sangita Ratnakara*.)

N. RAJAGOPALAN

\* \* \* \* \*

" No man but a blockhead ever wrote except for money."

— Samuel Johnson.

I am what I am !

\* \* \*

' It is certainly unwise to pay too much attention to incidents which the credulous relate with eager satisfaction and the more scrupulous or witty enquirer considers only as topics of ridicule.'

— Samuel Johnson.

## PREFACE TO A GARLAND (BOOK I) (Reproduced)

Prof. K.R. Srinivasa Ayyangar wrote:

' Indian Culture over the last ten thousand years has tried to preserve an impressive continuity of its own, whether it be the bullock-cart, the *Gayatri* or the spirit of the *Yagna* ! '

With due respect to the learned Professor, Carnatic Music can be added to it, since it is but the continuation of Indian Music as it was prior to the advent of Hindustani Music. Composers, musicians – vocalists and instrumentalists - musicologists, etc., come and go in a never-ending chain. The votaries have been increasing fast in numbers. Fortune, recognition and publicity crown the lives of some but many a musical genius is born to blush unseen and waste his fragrance in the desert air of neglect, lack of opportunity and perhaps Destiny. Time, with a complexity of pulls and pressures on it, takes notice of a few. Fortune and recognition confer their benign smile with spartan frugality on fewer still. Even if some are recognised, how many of them are remembered? **Gems of men with noble and immortal contributions have faded into the realms of anonymity with the passage of time.** Yehudi Menuhin said,

' All artistes are some gigantic Tennysonian band of light brigadiers for ever doing and dying without questioning their fate.'

Institutions and lovers of the Art have, therefore, a duty to record alike-

' the short and simple annals' of the less fortunate artistes and  
' the boast of heraldry and the pomp of power' of the fortunate few.

\* \*

There are books on the theory of music. There are biographies of some individual composers and musicians. There are a few collections of more than one or two biographies. Revered Subbarama Dikshitar did bring out brief facts of seventy-seven lives in 1904. Abraham Pandithar in 1917 and later Prof. P. Sambamurti recorded some facts likewise. The venerable Dr. U.Ve. Swaminatha Ayyar thought of bringing out a collection on the lives of eminent musicians but his noble life was a fight against the clock and the calendar. His weighty contribution attracted the notice of the Lord and he was withdrawn to be by His side before he could take up the work. The 'Who's Who' of musicians has but a limited coverage, scope and content.\* Thus there is no compilation of biographies in english giving details of past and present composers, musicians and musicologists for universal reference and circulation. Hymnodists were hitherto a neglected tribe. Hence I took up the arduous task of collecting and collating the biographies of all from libraries, newspapers,

\* Note : Dr. V.S. Sampathkumaracharya has recorded some lives in his Kannada book *Karnataka Paribhashika Sabda Kosa*.

magazines and books and by contacting artistes in person and by post. I visited places like Tiruvarur, Anandatandavapuram, Marudanallur, Govindapuram, Varanasi, Kanchipuram and Tirupati but could not extend my visits further owing to constraints of finance. My work, analogous to that of a pearl-diver who gathers the oysters and not make them, has gone on like that of a dedicated ant prior to the onset of the monsoon. Mine has not been the role of a critic. I have also not the ear to listen to or the inclination to gather demeaning details. ('Human stories are always welcome to the prurient palate.')

\* Focus thus is on the man, the God's creation and not on the creations of man though they figure conspicuously. Parentage and training, trials and tribulations, achievements and attainments, honours and titles, anecdotes and landmarks have been brought in as fully as is possible with sincerity backed by the opinions and views of renowned authorities and scholars to ensure conceptual fidelity.

I may pardonably mention that this work enjoys the merit and distinction of being —

- i. the first of its kind in english with as many as seven hundred biographies-big and small, past and present;(Someone had said that the trouble with history is that none lives beyond a page or two. Here are scores of artistes covering many more pages in spite of the constraints of space, number and finance.)
- ii. the first of its kind to bring within its scope the hymnodists (Oduvars) who have sustained the spiritual atmosphere through music in the far-flung temples as part of their daily duties; and
- iii. the first of its kind to take Carnatic Music as a whole without geographical or linguistic barriers, restraints and limitations.

In my view this work comes out at the most apposite time when Classical Carnatic music is set to conquer untilled soils in other continents where advance guards have already established contacts, connections and outposts. Hinduism had done it; Buddhism has done it later spectacularly; Gandhian philosophy had done it recently and attracted intelligentsia all over the world. Now classical Carnatic music is set to succeed.

SOUTH INDIA has the unique distinction of having set its heart and soul on Art and Culture. Is there any parallel to the hundreds of temples, sculptures and other cultural landmarks and activities seen in the entire stretch of Bharath south

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\* Note : Samuel Johnson is stated to have 'maintained that if a man is to write a *panegyric*, he may keep vices out of sight ; but if he professes to write a *Life*, he must represent it really as it was, (stating that) it would produce an instructive caution to avoid drinking when it was seen that even the learning and genius of P. could be debased by it'. But later, according to Boswell, he had modified his stand on the question whether a man's vices should be mentioned ; for instance , whether it should be mentioned that A. and P. drank too freely ; 'for people will probably more easily indulge in drinking from knowing this ; so that more ill may be done by the example than good by telling the whole truth'. I have followed the second stand though the first has its merits and attractions.

of the river Godavari ? Likewise, it has nurtured Carnatic music in the cradle of devotion with the fond care of a nurse, the loving passion of a mother, the far-sighted vision of a father and the wisdom of a guru. The fertile soil of the river systems, more particularly of the Cauvery, which led to a lot of leisure to the intellectual to follow his pursuits, innate genius of the people, robust cultural antiquity, congenial atmosphere for growth and the legacy of vibrant traditions helped the flowering and perfection of the Art and the Science of Carnatic music.

**Music was made *sine qua non* for auspicious functions and festivals - religious, social, cultural and even political.** Temples and Mutts were the bastions and nerve-centres for the sustenance of musicians and propagation of music. Royalty was assigned the duty to provide patronage while cultured families took patronage of musicians as status symbols. For instance, do the cultural suzerainty and the magnitude of patronage extended by the Rulers of Tanjore bear any comparison to the extent of their geographical suzerainty ? An enlightened society enabled musicians command the respect of the ruler and the ruled.

\* \* \*

SIR THOMAS BEECHAM said,

' This is the only country (U.K.) in the world where musicians are not expected to live. Of course, composers and musicians have always starved and, as this is a sentimental country, we think the tradition should be continued. '

It is common knowledge that the remark has had its greatest relevance to India. But Indian genius made a subtle distinction in the conferment of its approbation. Deliberate intent wove glory around the art and the contributions of the artiste and rarely on the life of the artiste himself. The composer or the musician received rich dividends of praise and respect but rarely it touched the fringe of his economic well-being. **The resultant indigence among artistes was the rule and fact of life. Nay, indigence was cultivated, practised and respected in India!** It was eulogised as promoting the well-being of Art and through Art, the attainment of Truth and Excellence and thus the Ultimate.

It was the genius and marvel of the Indian that by giving the spiritual capsule and cover to the normal fact of life, he adroitly took away the sting of economic distress. Abject poverty was the basic warranty of the artiste's absolute devotion and contribution to Art, Religion and Society. This basic ideal found its wavelengths in the concepts of *Daridra-Narayana*, Renunciation, etc. Rulers and the public respected such a status. The artiste took delight, not in his economic affluence or material prosperity, but in his artistic affluence and eminence raised on the sure basement of poverty. A Drona begged for a cow to provide milk for his child though his magnificent archery would have driven herds of cattle to his home like a marauding Tartar or a Mongol. The Tallapakkam stalwarts, Purandara Dasa and the Trinity could have struck mines of gold but chose, by

deliberate intent and conviction, to practise the concept outlined in the song '*Nidhi chala sukhama*'. The Saint of Tiruvisanallur, an intellectual seer, cried to the Lord not to curse him with wealth !

Thus, in this atmosphere, the artiste gave his all to Art - not as a mercenary but as a cultured devotee. The world understood his sacrifice even as it did the Heroes of Thermopylae and the Salt Satyagraha, stood before him and **paid obeisance not only to the Artiste and his Art but also to his Indigence!** That was the underlying basic difference between India and other countries though Johnson too had said, 'If misery be the effect of virtue, it ought to be revered'. Again it is this philosophy and way of life that Mahatma Gandhi, Vinobhaji and Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati, the Senior Sankaracharya of Kanchipuram (Paramacharyal) understood, assimilated, practised and exalted. The Indian Genius prescribed 'Sacrifice first, Service next'. The slogan in agronomy is, 'where rat is fat, man is lean'. In the field of Art, it was viewed that 'where artiste is lean, art is fat - with wealth and health'. Art did prosper to dizzy heights in an environment of grinding poverty. It was almost universal before and continues to be so in respect of a large number of artistes. Fortune has favoured but the few brave, as the saying goes.

I have said that people 'paid obeisance not only to the Artiste and his Art but also to his Indigence'. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan's observations are relevant in this context:

'How did the people of Ajanta caves work ? They worked with the spirit of dedication; they were pilgrims of the infinite; they were people who had no concern for life and light... If anything can be regarded as permanent in this world those paintings will be. So also at Ellora; so also what you find in Mahabalipuram. Did they all work for money? Did they work for recognition? ... They wrote because they could not help writing; they painted because they could not help painting; they sculptured because there was no alternative to that. It was a necessity imposed on them; it was spiritual necessity. Here you find a tradition; here you have had many great writers, you have had many musicians, many good dancers, singers, etc.

**From the time of the ancient Indus Valley civilization down to Gandhi and Ramakrishna, you have one spirit, one kind of discipline which they exalted. "**

**— (Search for Truth)**

\* \* \*

Great men of the past believed in '*Nishkamyakarma*' - service without expectation and ego. Who had built the countless temples, dug the tanks, constructed the choultries we have inherited and struggle even to maintain them? Vinobhaji thundered 'who gave air or the water?' The *prima donna* of Varnams, '*Viriboni*' continues to thrill but not much is known of its author. In fact, even his name is spelt differently. Recently, Semmangudi Dr. R. Srinivasa Ayyar said that the word 'Semmangudi' (the name of his village) confers on him a greater title and honour than all the doctorates, etc. Even so, when Adipayya

was known to be the composer of the jewel '*Viribonī*', what other facts were needed, people had thought. Values are changing. The Nation has a sacred duty to remember them all, recount their services and 'relate their artistic tales'. Conditions have improved a lot but still hundreds languish. The musical tradition that its aim is not mere entertainment, but a way of enlightenment and of achieving Godhood through praise of the Lord in His language still lingers.

\* \* \*

Now about the scheme of this work. Adoption of chronological order has been found to be difficult while alphabetical arrangement takes Purandara Dasa, the Trinity, etc., to the back pages as if in vindication of their ideals ! There are discrepancies in the dates and years of birth or death or lack of information of many due to adoption of local almanacs and other causes. (Beethoven is credited with maintaining against all evidence that he was born two years later.) 'The most delicate part of lexicographical pursuits is to determine who is alive and who has crossed the bar', said N. Slonimsky. Recording of deaths is avoided where it could not be verified.

An incident recorded by Leslie Ayre may be mentioned here:

" Mascagni was staying at Hotel 'M' and outside an organ grinder used to play the intermezzo from the opera. But he always played it too fast. As he could stand it no longer, he told him to play it slowly. Next day, Mascagni saw the man with the placard:

' PEPPINO, PUPIL OF MASCAGNI ' ! "

But because of our heritage, gurukulavasa and scholarships in recent years, some musicians have enjoyed a galaxy of preceptors!

As far as is possible, popular spelling names of places, etc., like Ramnad, Tanjore, Ayyar, etc., has been followed. Vina/Veena, sangeeth/sangit, etc., are used as per practice relevant. 'Disc recordings' include cassettes, etc., Appetizers and pabulum are incorporated.

IN CONCLUSION, I wish to confess that while taking up this arduous, awe-inspiring but fascinating work of vast proportions and baffling variety, I was conscious of the fact that I was treading on hallowed grounds. Only the fact that such a tribute deservedly due to the musical fraternity all along has not been made and the repeated words of cheer impelled me to take up this task resolutely. The '*Garland*' is sure to be very informative to musicians, music-lovers, students and researchers and be a welcome reference book on Carnatic music at schools, colleges, universities and public libraries. This is a reference book which deserves to adorn all libraries in India and abroad. This pioneering thesaurus, The '*Garland*' is unique in numbers, quality and range of coverage.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In a work such as this Garland series, sources are scattered, multitudinous and overlapping not to speak of contradictions. In this pearl-fishing, the net was cast wide and deep to collect the valuable oysters through requests in news-papers, individual letters and by personal contacts. Quite much of valuable information was collected from books and journals.

I offer my humble obeisance to H.H. the Paramacharyal Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Swamigal, to H.H. the Sankaracharya of Kanchi Kamakoti Mutt Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swamigal and to H.H. Sri Vijayendra Saraswati Swamigal of Kanchipuram. A fresh Srimukham of H.H. Sri Sankaracharya adorns this volume.

I owe a debt of gratitude to —

- a. the vast galaxy of composers, vocalists, instrumentalists, musicologists and hymnodists, who have held aloft the sacred banner of Classical Carnatic music through centuries facing undauntedly the coercive, repressive measures of invading unmusical hordes, chill penury and vicissitudes, like Patience sitting in monument smiling at grief, in their relentless mission to sustain the most ancient of musical systems still extant today;
- b. the numerous music-lovers and musicians and magazines like *Shanmukha* and *Sangeetham* (USA) who gave a word of cheer and encouragement whispering, '**Several talked about such a work, but only you have done it**' In tune with what Barnard M. Baruch said, '**Millions said that the apple fell; but Newton was the one to ask why**'; and
- c. the numerous authors, institutions, publishers and artistes who are the sources.

I record my deep debt of gratitude to —

- i. '*Sruti*' and '*Shanmukha*', magazines dedicated to the promotion of excellence and preservation of valued traditions in music and dance presenting valuable information on the lives of artistes;
- ii. The '*Hindu*', '*Indian Express*', and other newspapers and journals; and
- iii. Reputed institutions like the Music Academy, Kalakshetra and Sampradaya;

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**This pioneering work**

# **‘ANOTHER GARLAND’**

**(Biographical Dictionary of  
Carnatic Composers and Musicians- Book II)**

is  
**DEDICATED**  
to

my loving mother, Lakshmi alias Chellammal  
my saintly father, Naganatha Sastrigal,

my Gurus

Sri Papanasam Sivan  
Sri Subbarama Bhagavatar  
Sri. P.R. Sundar Rajan

and

my patron Deities

Sri Parvathavardhinī–Samēta  
Sri Rāmanāthaswāmi of Rāmeswaram,  
Sri Pūrṇa Pushkalāmbika samēta  
Sri Hari–Hara–Puthraswāmi, Mandhai and  
Sri Alarmēlumangāl samēta  
Sri Venkatēswaraswāmi, Tirupati.

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- ii. The Heart of Carnatic Music – The course of the river Cauvery indicating select musical nurseries and cradles.
- iii. The fragrant quartette –
 

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Sri Muthuswami Dikshitar, Architect of Raga form.  
Sri Syama Sastri, the Talaprastara maestro.  
Sri Gopalakrishna Bharati, Father of  
Tamil Music Renaissance.
- iv a. Jagatguru Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swamigal releasing 'A Garland', the first copy being received by Sri Haridos Giri Swamigal on June 19, 1990 at Kanchipuram. Sri Vijayendra Sarawati Swamigal is all smiles.
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\* \* \* \* \*

‘No, madam; of all noises music is the least disagreeable.’



### "THE HEART OF CARNATIC MUSIC"

The Bard of Tiruvaiyaru hails it as Rajarajeswari. The people of the delta worship it as their honoured mother or beloved daughter. From pre-historic times it has generated a vibrant civilisation and sustained a glorious culture that was soulful and a soul that was cultured. It has nurtured and cradled art, architecture, music, dance and everyone of the sixty-four arts in a measure that is the envy of the combined glory of Greece, Rome and Egypt. It is the River Cauvery, the Pride of the South. The map shows the river from Mettur Dam to its end at Poompuhar and the delta. The numbers on the map indicate the approximate situation of the musical centres shown against each below:

1. Tirupoonturuti, Tiruvaiyaru
2. Budalur
3. Vaiyacheri, Titte, Soolamangalam, Ayyampettai
4. Mangudi, Melattur, Uthukadu
5. Valangaiman, Marudhanallur, Visalur
6. Kabistalam, Umayalpuram, Swamimalai
7. Tirucherai, Kodavasal, Semmangudi, Injikudi, Paruthikudi
8. Konerirajapuram, Tiruvizhimalalai, Tiruppamburam, Achuthamangalam
9. Maruthuvakudi, Tiruvidaimarudur, Tirubhuvanam, Govindapuram, Kuttalam, Tiruvaduthurai
10. Tirupanandal, Tirukodikaval, Tiruvisanallur, Pandanallur, Marathurai
11. Komal, Gudalur, Mandhai, Kothavasal, Keeranur
12. Vaideeswarankoil, Anandatandavapuram, Tiruvenkadu, Sembanarkoil
13. Nachiarkoil
14. Tirumarugal, Tiruchengattangudi, Nagore
15. Udayarpalayam, T. Pazhuvur

## PART I

### The KRITI and the CURE

Jagadguru Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati visited Vidyaranyapura Agrahara on the western banks of river Tunga and entered the temple of Sri Sadasiva. Subramanya Sastri was living in a house within the temple compound and was performing *puja*. He was a violin master as well. He was for a long time suffering from stomach pain. His Holiness looked at him compassionately and advised him to play *Amba Natho Vinnappamu*, a kriti of Pallavi Gopala Iyer, daily at *Brahma Muhurta* for a cure. Subramanya Sastri faithfully followed the command of the Jagadguru and shortly got completely cured.

# I

## TAMIL ISAI

THE WORD '*Karnatakam*' refers not only to some undefined parts of Peninsular India but also to what is traditional and ancient. '*Carnatic*' is presumably a derivative of it. Carnatic Music is taken as the Indian music legated to posterity by ancients like Bharata, Sarngadeva, *et al*, as invasions and external influences happened to mould in North India a modified style now broadly classfied as Hindustani music. Carnatic and Hindustani styles do retain the common heritage of being raga-based. In the tamil areas of the South, '*Pann*' or Tamil Isai has had a hoary antiquity. The *Çilappadhikaram*, one of the ambrosial tamil epics (2nd - 3rd century A.D), revolves around music and dance. Madhavi, the heroine and Kovalan, the hero excel each other in music. Dance and music unite them as none else had been since their union isolates Kannagi, the just-wedded wife from her spouse for ever - yes, for ever. Though they come together at the end, it is only for tragic fate to intervene and cut asunder eternally the husband from the wife. If Music and Dance had united Madhavi and Kovalan, it is the same twin that leads to their parting of ways ending the spell of palmy days. Both are specialists in playing on the instrument 'yazh' which was then pre-eminently popular. '*Jeevaga Chintamani*' of Tirutakka Devar (9th century) portrays heroine Gandarvadattai as declaring that she would marry only the man who scores over her in playing on yazh! The passion – the domineering love of music is thus highlighted. Jeevagan accepts the challenge. His attempts to get at a yazh which enjoys immaculacy reveal his immense knowledge of musicology and expertise in the art of manufacture of the instrument itself. He discards many instruments - each for specific defects like the wood being soft, decayed, damaged (wounded) or struck earlier by thunderbolt; and finally selects one. He is not satisfied with it either! He has to remove streaks of unwanted nerves. That reveals the absolute mastery of the art and science by Tirutakka Devar and the artistes of his period too — a thousand years back.

Sekkizhar was a saintly poet to whom language and religion are eternally indebted. Aanaaya Nayanar is one of the Saivite Apostles described by him in his '*Peria Puranam*' written during 1139-1140 A.D. If Gandarvadattai and Jeevagan excelled in yazh, Nayanar's *forte* was in flute which has exercised a magic spell in India unparalleled in the history of musical instruments. Nayanar was a cow-boy unlettered and innocent. His flute-play was so divinely melodic that man, animal and the woods lost their animation and, true to the *Advaita* philosophy, lost themselves in the melody that emanated from the bamboo pipe holes – *Vide* page 274, *A Garland*. Tamil music was not a mere product of the fertile imagination of poets. As scripts are apt to be lost, Pallava Mahendra Varman (590 – 630 A.D) did not take chances. His Kudumiamalai rock inscriptions near Pudukottai are in elegant pallava grantha characters with one



line in tamil. The queen of Kulottunga Chola (12th century) did not stop with mastering music but proudly assumed the name of '*Ezhisai Vallabhi*' - Mistress of the Seven Notes ! Music pervaded the Palace, the habitations, the grazing fields and the rock. It was the staple of Tamilian life indeed ! This is an undisputed and undeniable fact.

Dr. Mu. Arunachalam, who taught *Saiva Siddhanta* at the Benares University, has garnered clinching evidence to re-establish that music in tamil areas, then called *Pann*, was in a very advanced state of perfection as an art and a science. He opines that it is contrary to truth to contrast Tamil Isai - *Pann* as distinct from Carnatic music, that music has always played a dominant role in tamilian culture, and that Bharata, author of the most ancient treatise *Natya Sastra*, was himself a tamilian, who migrated to the North to spread tamil music and brought out the sanskrit version *Natya Sastra* to further his objectives! In his works Dr. Arunachalam stakes the claim that the several works in sanskrit on music owe their birth and inspiration only to tamil music and concludes

- i. that there was then no scientific music literature in the whole of India except in Tamil Nadu,
- ii. that all the music which then existed was only tamil music; and
- iii. that there was no other music.

Many scholars may think that this is *non-sequitur*, and not a mere *faux pas* but *reductio ad absurdum*. But exaggeration is the essence of propagation of truth and its publicity!

Dr. N. Mahalingam clarifies how luxuriant tamil music metamorphosed into Carnatic music. Someswara Bhooloka Malla Varman (1116-1127 A.D) of the Western Chalukyas who authored the prominent thesaurus '*Manasa Ullasa*' called the music of the South - of the tamils included - as 'Karnataka Sangeetham' and the term has turned immortal. 'Karnataka' is made mention of by Kallinadha and Govinda Dikshitar.

Confining this discussion to the issue how *pann* music with such a glorious past came to suffer total eclipse that even its name came to be lost in obscurity and disuse, we have to turn to another Tamil Savant, T. Lakshmana Pillai of Trivandrum, a composer of eminence in tamil, scholar and musicologist. What he says is, in fact, applicable to all languages and musical systems. He says:

'It is a patent fact that, although we have ever so many compositions in tamil set to music, yet musical compositions as such, i.e., the compositions of lyrics calculated to embody the highest rhythmic expression of pure beauty in sound, has been a rarity in tamil. This has been an achievement by masters of Carnatic music in the telugu language. Not that tamil, which is so rich, sweet, tender and soul-stirring, has been found to be inappropriate. Far from it. **The experiment has simply never been tried.**'

— "*Songs*" - September 1933.

Pillai's enormous passion and love of undoubted purity for tamil do not cloud his analysis and he strikes at the truth behind the apparent tragedy of tamil yielding its primacy to telugu in the field of musical compositions during the last three centuries. His conclusion is accurate and correct. It is not denied that Muthu Thandavar (16th century), Marimutha Pillai and Arunachala Kavirayar (18th century) did bring out classical songs in tamil but they had a limited range and style. And demand outstripped the supply. To make this fundamental difference more clear, mention may be made of the distinction between *Sahitya Kavittvam* where Sahitya (text) claims primary attention as in the case of the songs of Annamacharya and *Sangita Kavittvam* where music assumes dominance. It is the difference between kriti and kirtana. R.A. Jayantha refers to this in '*Composers*' thus:

' That Annamacharya knew all the musical modes and forms of his times is obvious from his works. But he conceived his pada, as did the earlier devotional singers, primarily as devotional poetry. Music was mainly an aid to render them effectively.

The kritis of Tyagaraja and others, on the contrary, are conceived generally as musical compositions; and their poetry, however impressive, is mainly a verbal scaffold for raising a musical structure. Musical thought, rather than poetic thought, seems to determine their structure pattern. '

The same point is stressed by R. Rangaramanuja Ayyangar when he says:

' As a vehicle for musical expression, tamil is **not** inferior to telugu, sanskrit, kannada or malayalam. But most of the tamil compositions are hybrid products. The words of a tamil scholar innocent of music have been grafted on the music of a singer practically illiterate. '

— '*Musings of a Musician*'.

The fundamental point for notice is that verses are not songs and, even if set to tunes, rarely could be melodic enjoying the graces of pure music which could stand the test of time. Some non-musicians like the Kadigai Pulavars, Arunachala Kavirayar, Periaswami Thooran and Ambhujam Krishna wisely availed of the services of musicians even while composing and perhaps were able to imbibe the melodic needs and graces required and induct and inject them in their compositions.

Of course, in the last century and the present, a galaxy of tamil composers appeared like Kavi Kunjara Bharati, Gopala Krishna Bharati, Vedanayakam Pillai, Ghanam Krishnier, Uthukadu Venkatasubba Ayyar, Ramaswami Sivan, Tanjore Quartette, Nilakanta Sivan, Annamalai Reddiar, Subramania Bharati and Papanasam Sivan. The impact made till the middle of this century was not, however, impressive since the musical market was already the monopoly of telugu composers, telugu songs and musicians fully oriented in them. Audience might not have fully appreciated the sahitya but felt drawn by the lure of the captivating tunes of masters. The Carnatic Trinity (1762-1847) who hailed from Tiruvarur and composers immediately before and after them had presented

exquisite, bhava-laden, rasa-oriented, melody-based matchless songs in plenty. Where there was a drought before, there came cyclonic floods. The Cauvery and other rivers saw flood-waters to the brim; rivulets, canals and channels all flowed with the fragrant waters of such compositions. The reservoir of telugu songs did not also get depleted but got replenished repeatedly. There were periods of political vacuity and occasional economic droughts but telugu songs occasionally spiced with sanskrit and tamil songs presented a picture of affluence, prosperity and satisfaction. There was indeed a glut of telugu songs. The preference to the telugu songs was never on grounds of language ; and to state so, is unfair. The telugu compositions readily answered a felt need, satisfied the pangs of heart and soul and met the cry of artistic desire. 'In Thevaram, there was no scope for improvisation. It was more or less equivalent of the Gregorian chant - the Church music of the West', writes Dr.S.Ramanathan, an authority on tamil music. Surely few could resort to verses and set them to tunes as they could not answer the melodic demands of a musically-oriented community where music is a must for everything - worship, festival, function, birth or death. It would be the difference between a Beethoven and a Macaulay prose or a Miltonic poem being set to tune. While the demand for songs increased multifold, the market was full of immortal tamil literature but few tamil songs. Folk songs and Thevaram could offer no melodic pieces for full-scale concerts. Kambar, Villiputturar, Ottakoothar electrified the field of literature but had no time to enter the field of melody. The emphasis of the times was on poetry and not on lyrics. Here is a specimen of the alternatives that confronted Lord Byron :

‘ I've half a mind to tumble down to prose:  
But verse is more in fashion. ’

T. Lakshmana Pillai has to be understood, accepted and conceded. The telugu songs were presented on a platter for students to learn quickly and musicians to sing without ado. As the landholder travelling in his cart sees his car coming, he gets down and boards it. It is not aversion to the former but a preference to the latter *vis-a-vis* travel comfort and conditions. He comes back and summons his cart to go to his field since the car is ill-suited for it. It was so with musicians and music-lovers. No partiality; no aversion. How can one have aversion to a language rich in its history and literature and is the mother tongue ? Fully cooked dishes in crisp and spiced telugu came to be available in plenty and the craze to compose in telugu was also the phenomenon of the times. Acharya Kripalani told Frank Antony in Parliament that english would be spoken by Indian children even if it is forgotten in England and he even mimicked how our children called 'mummy'. Tamil had invaded Indonesia centuries back. Telugu compositions came to invade musical forums here. Tamil compositions of the few masters held the field with select musicians but could not command primacy. It was pure invisible market mechanism with no non-musical overtones.

colours as the melody-market expanded. The expansion is attributable to the supply of the rich telugu fare. When the reservoir is full and replenishment is good, outflow is naturally copious.

Sanskrit could be said to be above the common man's reach; but telugu suffered no such inhibition. The telugu of the Trinity and others of the South is not the puritan language of scholars of Upper Andhra but of the people in Tamil Nadu speaking tamil or tamilised telugu. Besides there is a substantial telugu - speaking segment in Tamil Nadu. When Eminence composed songs in telugu, other celebrities followed impelled by a desire to join the rank of immortals and not out of any felt or spelt antagonism to tamil. (What one sees now in respect of english is similar. English medium schools enjoy a gala field and time.) Bhava-based telugu songs full of melodic content and scope for nuances available in hundreds stole the show and monopolised concerts as musicians are rarely composers, choreographers or tune-setters. They are retailers mostly, their *tour de force* being melodic presentation. Telugu, termed the Italian of the East, praised by Bharati himself as 'Sundara' (sweet), enjoying soft-flow with tenderness of tone monopolised classical concerts in the South. 'We did sing in tamil though there were not many good compositions. Tamil songs were then few', says Dr.Semmangudi Srinivasa Ayyar. Other musicians too had availed of tamil songs, while a few had ignored them, which was an error in approach and judgment. An erroneous belief identifying classicism with telugu songs had also gained ground earlier resulting in some established artistes refraining from singing the available tamil songs. The position from the view-point of tamil as a language was rather strange viewed against its pre-eminence in literature and history.

Musicians not conversant with telugu committed mistakes in pronunciation erroneously conveying the sahitya-bhava in varying degrees which came up for criticism and gave an edge to the demand for tamil songs. Subramania Bharati wrote:

"Several musicians do not know that the Soul of Music lies only in the Navarasas... they eliminate the life of music and project only the bare body - the corpse of music ! Most of the vidwans do not know the meaning. They murder or swallow letters and words. A person who does not know the meaning cannot bring out the *rasas* (emotions)."

K.V. Srinivasa Ayyangar, the senior among the Tiger Trio and a musicologist of repute, in his '*Tyagarajah Hrudayam*' referred 'to the murder of sahitya out of sheer ignorance of the language' and to the consequential absence of bhava and rasa. To the knowledgeable, this is unpardonable. (If someone sings the matchless Freedom Struggle song '*Acchamillai*' in '*Sahana*', the raga of compassion and pity, even Pandey of the First War of Independence, Vanchinathan of Ashe Murder case and Tiruppur Kumaran who all willingly sacrificed their lives for the country would have been enfeebled and turned Detriate of Iocation.) To project the bhava, the musician has to know the meaning

and to understand what is presented, the audience has to know the language. So there was considerable vocal insistence not only for tamil songs but for tamil songs alone. Synchronising with this, the output of telugu songs also diminished during the present century and there was meagre replenishment to the repertory. Songs of sublimity such as those of Papanasam Sivan or Uthukadu Venkatasubba Ayyar in tamil and those of the Trinity in telugu or sanskrit are not composed everyday.

The plea for tamil songs coincided with the Tamil Resurgence Movement. Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar of Chettinad was the principal inspiration behind the Movement for Tamil Isai. 1929 saw him founding the Meenakshi College of Music at Chidambaram and 1932 its affiliation to the Annamalai University, also founded by him. The First Tamil Isai Conference held at Annamalai Nagar in August 1941 evoked considerable response and enthusiasm and was held amidst much fanfare with the University to back it. The Conference resolved that songs sung at concerts should be entirely in tamil. This stand drew a barrage of criticism and came up for an equally vehement support. Justice T.L. Venkatarama Ayyar said that while perceptible changes had occurred in recent decades, over-enthusiasm in the cause of tamil songs was not correct since most of the available repertory in tamil lacked the aesthetic and technical perfection found in the compositions of the Trinity. He said:

' In the field of music pure and simple, the language of the piece is necessarily of secondary importance. Music has a language all of its own and transcended the language of the composition. The excellence of a song could be judged only by the manipulation of the swaras themselves within the confines of the raga and not merely by the words or the language used. '

T.T. Krishnamachari opined that restricting a concert to tamil songs alone would severely deter any advancement whatsoever in music and that it would be linguistic vandalism to fit in or dub words of one language to famous compositions in another language. The pro-changers found in Tiger K. Varadachariar a strong supporter and he clarified meaningfully:

' The object of the Tamil Isai Movement is not to oust songs in other languages but to give tamil audiences the best appreciation of tamil music. This is a movement towards the enrichment of tamil; but it also involves the enrichment of music. '

Tiger was a liberal known for his robust views. The movement enlisted the support of eminent musicians and composers like Suddhananda Bharati, Ariyakudi Ramanuja Ayyangar, Musiri Subramania Ayyar, Madurai Mani Ayyar, Chittoor Subramania Pillai, Papanasam Sivan and K.B. Sundarambal to preside over the Annual Tamil Isai Conferences. The Music Festivals simultaneously held feature songs in tamil alone and there have been occasionally full-scale concerts only with the compositions of Uthukadu Venkatasubba Ayyar and tuned verses from Kamba Ramayanam. It is worth a mention that several celebrated musicians like G.N. Balasubramaniam, Musiri Subramania Ayyar and Madurai

ii Ayyar had always a passion for songs in tamil and have delighted the audience with sparkling songs indicating that neither the language nor the music was deficient or at fault and that it was only that the genius of the tamil has not been directed to bring out adequate musical compositions in the centuries past.

Tamil songs of eminent composers are now available and have taken their rightful place well patronised and appreciated. Language is no barrier now. There is a happy blend, co-existence and co-parcenary of songs in tamil and other languages. Numerous publications in tamil have helped this development. Tamil Isai Movement is to be congratulated for taking *Pann* research and it can be hoped that the demand of musicians to make the inimitable Thevaram and other spiritual hymns concert-worthy would receive due attention so that these immortal treasures find wider exposure through concerts. Of course, the way is tortuous and the result unknown.

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### Unimpeachable Evidence

Mention has been made of the tamil epic *Jeevaga Chintamani* wherein the contest between Gandarvadattai and Jeevagan has been mentioned. Dr. M. Rajamanikkanar, Director for Historical Research, Tiruchirappalli has brought to light a sculpture in the temple of Nalthunai Ishwara in Ponsai village, Mayiladuthurai area. The panel is in two parts. One half portrays a male artiste seated with a yazh supported on his right thigh, his right hand being placed over the strings and the left hand at the tail-end. The other half of the panel presents a beautiful woman with a yazh resting on her thigh with the left hand on the strings and the right hand at its tail-end. The photo of the sculpture is given in this book. It shows other figures - either friends or accompanists. Dr. Rajamanikkanar, Director of the Centre, unequivocally avers that the panel represents the scene of the contest between Gandarvadattai and Jeevagan. His version is fully substantiated. The fact that the scene finds mention in literature and a place in sculpture indicates that it may be based on some real event of the times.

\* \* \*

### THE REASON

George V frequented the opera *La Boheme*. Thomas Beecham asked :

‘Is this opera your favourite?’

‘Yes.’

‘I’d be most interested to know why.’

‘Because it’s much the shortest !’

( So, lesser the length, greater the interest ! )

## II

### RAGA - AN INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY?

Two stalwarts of the musical world visualise a comprehensive project worthy of the ancient art to arrest the apparent deterioration in audience-attendance at concerts and to invigorate the presentation of classical music at rural centres which now stand starved of good music consequent on the accelerated migration of musicians to Madras and the decelerated conduct of temple festivals and fairs.

On an auspicious day, the two veterans enter the chambers of the popular Chairman and Managing Director of a Lead Bank. The Chairman, a connoisseur of music, is delighted to see the Bhishma and the Yuthishtira of Carnatic music together and receives them with his accustomed warmth. The two musical colossuses with round faces brimming with self-assurance explain in brief their project and indicate how it depends on the outlay of considerable funds. The broad smile that pervaded the rectangular face of the Bank Chief slowly yields to visible strains of serious thinking - the anxiety to support a good project seeking to dominate and prevail over banking norms and *vice versa*.

**Security?** The Senior undertakes to pledge his right to sing in raga *Kharaharapriya* and the Junior his right to sing in raga *Mohanam* or *Bilahari* or both. There is no mention of personal or other security. Puzzled by the strange offer to pledge individual right to sing in specific ragas, the Chief seeks clarification. The applicants point out how Todi Sitarama Ayyar **got a loan pledging his rights to sing** in raga *Todi* and how Sankarabharanam Narasier got funds by mortgaging his **rights** to sing in *Sankarabharanam* as security, how they had proved that the plighted word of a true artiste is the best of securities and how they did not resort to their favourite *tours de force* till they were redeemed. They adduce further proof by describing how the great Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar himself had called the song '*Giripai*' (*Sahana*) as the **property** of Bikshandarkoil Subbarayar and how Tyagaraja **relinquished** his right to compose in raga *Anandabhairavi* at the instance of Tirubhuvanam Swaminatha Ayyar as exercises in '**Property rights in ragas**'. The Bank Chief could not reconcile himself to the validity of these averments *vis-a-vis* the Banking Law. True to the dictum that not only things are done well but are seen to be done so, he requisitions the services of the Law Officer of the Bank. The legal luminary starts giving an elaborate unmusical alapana on the legality of the request as if intent on tearing to shreds any remote possibility of the musical project going on steam with Bank funds got on the basis of the cited mortgages. To the misfortune of the musical luminaries, he is seen to be an avatar of a musicologist ex-officio.

The Law Officer clarifies that Indian 'raga' has no fixed shape, notation or set mode of rendition, that within the broad portals of the *arohana* and the *avarohana*, the musician improvises and innovates like the serene flights of Garuda (eagle) based on his training, expertise and talents and such exposition varies with each concert like shapes assumed by passing clouds or their shadows. A genuine classical artiste does not / cannot conform to any set pattern or style *in toto*. He illustrates his point with the known fact how the same raga adopted for different songs composed by the same person, liberates various shades of the raga swaroopa or shape without any element of repetition or duplication of graces, gamakas and brikas or modes of presentation. Raga rendition thus does not lend itself to be 'patented' or 'copyrighted' as everything is fresh, alterable, original and obvious everytime. No artiste can claim to have 'created', 'designed' or 'patented' a raga to qualify for copyright! If a brika resembles T.N. Rajarathinam's *Todi*, the musician is not accused of 'infringement'. Even if one repeats in totality S.G. Kittappa songs, he is not guilty of piracy or infringement since no vested right is interfered with. Even the so-called invention of ragas is nothing but bringing to light the inherent permutations and combinations in the schemes of Venkatamakhin or Govindachariar. Though Indian Copyrights are valid in countries which are members of the Bern Convention, the absence of basis for copyright in India does not enable exercise of any right elsewhere too. It is an admitted fact that raga rendition enjoys neither the absolute precision nor the fixed originality which writings, photographs, labels and specific compositions can lay claim to. As a claim to copyright fails, the element of property rights is simply *nullius in law* – unenforceable in law.

The artistes leave the legal luminary in his 'charanam' and revert to their 'pallavi' to lay stress again on the cited cases of the two musicians and insist that their present request could not be viewed differently. The Law Officer marshals his knowledge of traditions in music and avers that music programmes, programme content, values of appreciation and norms for patronage have undergone radical changes in the course of the present century, that decades back, concerts hovered around specifics like a pallavi or a particular raga, that specialisation in one or more of such specifics was then the prime asset of musicians and the expectation of the audience and that is the reason why we hear of Pallavi Sessa Ayyar, Pallavi Gopala Ayyar, etc., on the one hand and Todi Sitarama Ayyar, Begada Subramania Ayyar, etc. on the other. *Sans* their pallavi, the former might not have flourished and *sans* their specialisation in the individual ragas, the latter category might have forfeited their claim to glory. The position is different now and without the specific ragas now offered as security, the two vidwans could go through hundreds of concerts in India and abroad without any loss of prestige, position or popularity. Thus the specific assets which the earlier vidwans could create and hold have ceased to command similar relevance now.



The Legal Expert further mentions that even in U.K., the earlier '*Musical (Summary Proceedings) Copyright Act 1920*' has ceased to be in force but that the following definitions therein which extended copyright protection to '**sounds recorded** which were original products of skill and labour' may have significant relevance to understand issues.

'Sound recordings' is defined as 'the aggregate of sounds embodied in and capable of being reproduced by means of a record of any description, other than a sound track associated with a film' and 'Record' is defined as 'a disc, tape, etc.'

For copyright, there should be precision and invariability with originality, which Indian raga rendition does not take credit for based as it is on spot improvisation. There were *Dramatic and Musical Performances Protection Acts* enacted from time to time in United Kingdom to protect what had been **created**. Even the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act, 1988* would not cover musical works unless and until they are created. Rights could accrue on the creation and existence of something in this context but not before its advent or birth.

CHAIRMAN: 'Could you put the structure of the legal position in brief?'

Law Officer: 'Yes Sir. Long back, musicians specialised either in ragam, tanam and pallavi or in select ragas they became famous for. In result, they were 'invested' with the credit for the specialisation and in due course the credit came to be treated as a 'deemed asset'. While it was in truth an intellectual asset, it did not amount to 'property' in legal terms. *Sans* the specialisation, the musician had no market for his music. Thus in common parlance, the 'deemed' intellectual expertise came to be treated as 'property'. There was, of course, no means of enforcing a mortgage in the event of non-redemption.'

But now musicians are generalists owing to changes in concert patterns and public tastes. One could carry on for decades without redeeming the mortgaged raga. **While Narasier or Sitarama Ayyar could not hope to flourish in the present day, our senior vidwans would have to specialise considerably if they were to give concerts in those conditions.** Hence the 'mortgage of ragas' indulged in yester decades is not available to the distinguished vidwans before you.'

CHAIRMAN: 'Thank you.'

The Chairman feels relieved of his burden by the lucid exposition of his Law Officer and is, in fact, surprised at the vast compass and depth of his knowledge and smiles with relief as if bidding good-bye. The cruel alapana on the legality of property rights in raga rendition floors the musicians and their spirits dip to **anumandara** even as the lift carrying them touches the basement.

### III

## WOMEN IN MELODY

'Music is the highest art and, to those who understand, is the highest worship', declared Swami Vivekananda. Purandara Dasa fully understood it; and had thoughtfully followed the '*Sthula Arundhati Nyaya*' in taking the students of music step by step. The method is named after the venerable lady and not after her exalted spiritual spouse Vasishtha ! A rare and rich tribute to Womanhood indeed ! Quite a large number of ragas are named after women. The presiding deities of Learning and Fortune are Goddesses. Vivekananda extols womanhood and in the same breath bemoans their lot thus:

"Thou are the Goddess of Fortune. Thou are the supreme Goddess... The goddess who resides in all beings as Power. 'The Gods are pleased where women are held in esteem', says the old Manu.

Why is it that our country is the weakest and the most backward of all countries ? Because Shakti is held in dishonour. Without the grace of Shakti nothing is to be accomplished... To me, Mother's grace is a hundred times more valuable than Father's... fie on him who has no devotion for the Mother.... If an Indian woman in Indian dress preaches the religion which fell from the lips of the Rishis of India, it will inundate the Western world. Will there be no women in the land of Maitreyi, Khana, Lilavati, Savitri and Ubhayabharati?" \*

## MUSICIANS

How far and in what measure did Bharat respond to the call of the Swamiji? Confining the theme immediately to the realm of music, and more presently to Classical Carnatic music, it is seen that just a few musicians from the fair sector had lent grace and image to the ambrosial art allotted to women by the great tamil poet Sekkizhar when he says, *Arambayar Sangita Oli*. It is relevant to make mention of some:

**Bangalore Nagarathinam Ammal:** A devoted lady whose life, wealth and time were laid at the altar of classical music and who immortalised her life by taking the initiative to construct the Samadhi of Sri Tyagaraja. There were disciples galore but it was left to the eternal fame of this lady-musician to achieve it! (*Vide Part II.*)

**Coimbatore Thayee:** Though she did not enjoy a majestic (*gambhira*) voice, her tone and rendition were soothing and aesthetically satisfying. Her four-hour

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\* Note : The contrast in approach of the Swamiji from India and of Samuel Johnson of the West is striking. Boswell told him that he had been that morning to a meeting of the Quakers, where he heard a woman preach.

Johnson : " 'Sir, a woman preaching is like a dog walking on his hind legs. It is not done well ; but you are surprised to find it done at all.' " (Boswell)

concerts would start with four *kalais* and with *pallavi* would come two *kalais* and there would be a happy blend of *javalis*, *tamil* songs, etc. Kivalur Ramachandra Ayyar and Veenai Dhanammal were among her *gurus*. She had given discs. Enjoyed an extensive repertoire. Tiruvotriyur Tyagayyar was her patron.

**Tiruvidaïmarudur Bhavani:** That she took to music at the advanced age of twenty-five did not deter her climbing the peak. High-pitched voice, fast-moving rendition, bewildering *birkas* and '*akaram*' marked her concerts covering *kritis* in different languages and *tillana*. Enjoyed a ringing voice. Srivanjiam Ganapati Ayyar was her *guru*.

**Enadi Sisters: Lakshminarayani and Rangiammal:** Disciples of Patnam Subramania Ayyar, they were speed merchants in melody and a popular duo. (*Vide Part II*)

**Dhanakoti Sisters: Dhanakoti Ammal and Kamakshi Ammal:** They belonged to the Syama Sastri disciple-line. Kamakshi Ammal was Kanchipuram Naina Pillai's mother and in a way T. Mukta's *guru*. The sisters had powerful, resonant voice and their concerts were gripping and popular. Puducheri Rangaswami Ayyar gave them advanced training in the intricacies and nuances of rendition at concerts. They were adepts in *pallavi* rendition – a rare feat for musicians of the fair sex. They enjoyed an immense repertoire. (*Vide page 49 of A Garland.*)

**Madras Peria Pappammal and Radha Ammal:** They were daughters of Salem Meenakshi and were giving concerts in numbers.

**Tiruvarur Rajayee:** The chosen child of Melody, Rajayee was a child prodigy. A melody queen, she was the delight of the *cognoscenti* and the lay. She came, conquered and disappeared when she was just five and twenty. (*Vide Part II.*)

**Bangalore Thayee:** She was a musician of chaste techniques and aesthetics. 'I listened to a recital by her in 1923. She began with Veena Kuppier's *tana varna* in *Begada*. I was quite familiar with it. But the lady's version was a revelation. It was brilliant and arresting. It brought instant tears to my eyes.' (R.R. Ayyangar)

Mudicondan Venkatarama Ayyar, T. Sankaran and 'Dhanyan' give absorbing account of these lady-artistes. Besides these, there were Tiruvidaïmarudur Pankajam, Veenai Dhanammal, Dhanam Sisters, Tirunelveli Rangamma and Shanmughavadivu. Veenai Dhanammal was a colossus; Shanmugavadivu was popular and K.B. Sundarambal was a star in dramas and had not taken to concerts yet then.

Classical music was not the monopoly of concert musicians alone since it reigned supreme on dramatic stages too. Ladies had not taken to the stage in those distant decades in numbers and feminine roles too were the monopoly of

male actors only. This author himself has taken the role of heroine. If women's contribution to Classical Carnatic music was meagre from vocalists and actors, it was not much different otherwise too. Though flute is one of the oldest instruments known to Indians, according to Flautist H. Ramachandra Sastri 'only in the twenties of this century did women like Valadi Rukmini and Mayavaram Silk Papa take to flute'.

As regards percussion, it is said that long back, there was a woman during the Maratha rule. Says T. Sankaran:

'The first woman to play on mridangam I knew of was Tirugokarnam Ranganayaki Ammal, daughter of Sivarama Nattuvanar. The earliest violinists I have heard of were M.S. Subbulakshmi's grandmother, and Kanchipuram Naina Pillai's grandmother Visalakshi Ammal. Veena was an accepted ladies' instrument but in reality was dominated only by males.'

He too confirms that the first woman flautist was Valadi Rukmini. It is surprising to find that the foremost flautist of all times and the Prince of Sringeri had not chosen to impart training in flute-play even to his divine consorts Rukmini and Radha! The earliest to sing pallavi was Palani Anjugathammal, mother of Palani Subramania Pillai. The first woman musician who asserted her equality with men in the dexterous handling of laya and swara through pallavi is only Sangita Kalanidhi D.K. Pattammal. There was a musical joke on this in fact. **The patron host enquired whether the lady-musician knew 'pallavi'. Promptly the artiste's mother cut in with obvious pride, 'why pallavi alone, she knows anupallavi and charanam too'.**

But it is seen that they were all closely attached to their native soil and did not cross the Carnatic frontiers. Melody has attracted in recent decades vast numbers of votaries from women and several of them have made their advent on foreign soil too. A few have caught the imagination of the West with their captivating melody like Dr. M.S. Subbulakshmi, Dr.M.L. Vasantakumari and Sangita Kalanidhi D.K. Pattammal. Dr. M.S. Subbulakshmi was easily India's first internationally known singer making her debut at all the Western great centres and she has endeared herself to thousands of music-lovers the world over. Dr. M.L. Vasantakumari did likewise. Many others too have taken Carnatic music across the seas with merit. But the overall effort is spasmodic and the effect inadequate. The impact of their visits and the momentum created are yet to attain the measure of 'inundation' or conquest as visualised by Vivekananda almost a century back.

## COMPOSERS

While the advent of performing women artistes is presently on the *arohana*, no such development is visible in the allied art of composition. In the past too, it was negligible confined to a few like Tallapakkam Thimmakka, Rangajamma,

mistress of Rajah Vijaya Raghava Nayak (1637-1673) who wrote '*Mannaru Dasa Vilasam*', a yakshagana enacted in the court, Ramachandramba who wrote '*Raghunathabhyudayam*', Kuttikunju Thangacchi, D. Pattammal, Andavan Pichai and Ambujam Krishna justifying the dictum of Sir Thomas Beecham:

' There are no women composers;  
never have been and  
possibly never will be. '

Why is this barrenness and drought ? Indian womanhood was not incapable of attaining scholarship. Gargi participated in the deliberations of Janaka's Council of the Learned. Maitreyi, wife of Sage Yajnavalkya was a philosopher. Sarasavani was the arbiter for the disputation between Adi Sankara and Mandanamisra. Avvaiyar's image is transcendental and contribution magnificent. But they figure as isolated planets in the otherwise starless sky.

### INFRA DIGNITATEM ?

Tyagaraja and Muthuswami Dikshitar had each two spouses who lived in an Ocean of Melody, Composition and Scholarship. Had they not accepted the world as it came to them and adopted the glory and eminence of their Lords as their own presumably asserting their faith in the concept of *Ardhanarishwara*? The success of their spouses was theirs and they died gloriously and contentedly before, and figuratively on the lap of, their spouses. Did not King Janaka tell Rama, 'This is my daughter Sita who shall follow you like your own shadow and help you in your acts and shall consider you as her own self' - "*Iyam Sita ...*"? What a glorious sacrifice it was *sans ego* ! Self effacement in entirety !! The good samaritan S. Vedanayakam Pillai married five women one after another and what was their contribution? Nil. Pillai is eloquent in praising family women in his *Kula Stri*. They had all illumined his home and left name and fame to him. Nagaswara maestro T.N. Rajarathinam kept parity with him and married five; and from dawn to dusk, why whole nights even, they should have been suckled and lullabied to sleep with delightful melody from the magical instrument of Pillai. Perhaps the junior-most alone had touched the instrument. There was some consolation from the home of Kanchipuram Naina Pillai. While his first wife Kuttiyamma fell in line with the customary practice, the second, Kupamma learnt music from Mannargudi Pakkiri Pillai and along with her sister Ramatilakam, a disciple of her husband, gave concerts. Odeon Company had recorded her music too. They were professionals.

The homes of the stalwarts of Carnatic music had been flooded with the visits of the cultured cream of composers, performing artistes, musicologists and scholars, stay of scores of disciples learning under gurukulavasa and with demonstrations and discussions humming with intellectual activity of the noblest

grade. If one avers, 'Woman, thy name is Music', not a whisper of protest shall be heard. It is a natural fact. If Sarabha Sastri could recite without tuitions Vedas taught by a priest to his pupils on the pial of the opposite house *in toto*, how could women have remained free from claiming similar assimilated knowledge and expertise? If sons could claim and inherit musical legacy, why did not daughters, sisters and wives? Heritability of immovable property had been confined to males by deliberate intent but there was no such overt inhibition or bar extending to intellectual property viz., the different branches of music. No home was complete without women singing lullabies *in excelsis* and no marriage or function was complete without women singing *ingenue* (as unsophisticated persons). What was then the inhibition that had prevented women flowering forth as top musicians and composers?

'Men are nervous of remarkable women', said J.M. Barrier. Male chauvinism was the culprit that made it *infra dignitatem* for women to compete and master. This phenomenon is not peculiar to India as the following anecdote from Boswell should confirm.

'At breakfast, Dr. Johnson received a letter which seemed to agitate him very much ; he exclaimed,

" One of the most dreadful things that has happened in my time ... Mr. Thrale has lost his only son! . . . This is a total extinction to their family, as much as if they were sold into captivity."

Upon my mentioning that Mr. Thrale had daughters,

" Daughters! ", said Johnson warmly, "he'll no more value his daughters than . . . " '

Unconscious self- interest and jealousy had dictated that women shall be kept away from a field where they were sure to excel; and, in result, art and science had lost possible weighty contributions of the most laudable nature from a moiety of the nation. D.K. Pattammal claims that music is the property and preserve of women. But it was not reflected in practice. The care and corpus of the alleged right stand unclaimed still .

Women do exercise influence at homes and elsewhere. Even Vivekananda wrote so a century back - of course, from America:

' I must first go and buy some clothing.  
**That is what the ladies advise me to do ! '**

Nobel Laureate Sir C.V. Raman as a budding scientist of nineteen, during his Presidency College days at Madras, fell in love with Lokasundari and married her as a bride of thirteen. In her theosophist brother's house, she sang and played on the veena '*Rama nee samana mevaru*' (*Kharaharapriya*). (Which Rama she had in mind is not clear!) Raman refused the dowry offered and proved that he was *non pareil* ! An accomplished veena player, she was a great force

influencing his whole life but chose to remain as his shadow. (C.M. Ramachandra). Even in the home of that most enlightened Indian Scientist where there was copious love, the Indian lady had found her advent on this planet satisfying to see her Lord receive the coveted Nobel Prize and remain his *alter ego* with her veena.

Convention, custom, injunctions of religion and the impact of classic examples from the epics had inculcated a deep sense of devotion in women to their spouses and homes and they took pride in playing the role of *grihalakshmi(s)* (Queens of the Homes) to shape the destinies of the male folk and children and share their homely joys and glories playing a secondary, supplementary and ancillary role in all non-domestic fields including music. Man exalted the melody of woman but had not thought it fit to invest her with a knowledge of theory and allow her to become and blossom into composers and concert-worthy musicians. It was assumed to be *infra dig* to the status of the family. If there was art in the icon and idol of goddesses in temples and caves, there was beauty and innate music in the goddesses at homes. The one in the temple and its replica at home were idolised but none had composed and few were allowed to sing in public! One contributory factor was that training and performance were essentially rural-based till the fifties of this century and women commanded only restricted facilities for travel and stay. The scope for musical advent in rural environment in yester decades was thus little. Religion conferred status on woman in enjoining on her presence at ceremonies. Custom glorified her status and image but that did not extend to males permitting or ladies taking to present concerts and composing!!! That resulted in a drought of lady-artistes and a complete famine of lady-composers. The sun, of course, peeped through the winter clouds occasionally only to be shadowed out and swallowed by denser clouds. It was all peep-bo (hiding and appearing)! Not Sambho, the all pervasive.

The ruddy edge of the tropical sun at dawn would seem to prophesy an inundation of bright sunshine. In what measure and depth, only the Oracle could say. May we look forward to weighty contributions from woman-composers!

\* \* \* \* \*

" What have I done to keep in mind  
My debt to her and womankind?

\* \*

' Men triumph over women still,  
Men trample women's rights at will,  
And Man's lust roves the world untamed.'

\* \*

O grave, shut lest I be shamed.

— (C.L.M. — John Masefield)

## IV

### TRENDS AND TRENDS

#### Let Experts Speak

'What will the future of Classical Carnatic music be', is an oft-repeated issue. If the number of performing artistes and apprentices is the criterion, there is no need for any apprehension. But there is a persistent and visible fall in audience—attendance at concerts. There has been a marked shift in styles, concert—content and quality of specialisation. Musicology is said to be commanding fewer votaries while pallavi, ragamalika and such other specialised items have practically disappeared. There is a persistent feeling that standards have fallen and full—time *nadopasakas* among the up—coming generations are not many. It is, therefore, suggested that the issue be brought to focus in the context of international trends and views. The diverse trends in regard to music are briefly touched upon here. The ambit of this brief exercise is limited but it should enable and lead to an in-depth, comprehensive analysis. The most self-assuring view is that of T.S. Parthasarathy of the Music Academy, Madras:

' Indian music is on the march, sensitive to all the winds that blow in world music and responding to new influences. It represents the peak to which an Oriental System of Music, with melody as its base, could reach and yet be receptive to ideas and capable of growth. This priceless heritage of India deserves to be preserved for the uplift of the level of consciousness of its human society. '

(JMAM LX / 89)

#### HERITAGE IN DANGER

What T.S. Parthasarathy has said would seem to be the cry of a robust heart, an ardent cry of desire, since many artistes allegedly pursue *video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor* (I see and approve the better course, but pursue the worse) ! Here is a general opinion of a very competent and sympathetic authority:

' What does sadden me, however, is the way, in which, with unseemly haste, every tribe promptly abandons its own idiom, most people their characteristic music style and language to play admittedly great Western works.... thus destroying their ancient irreplaceable gift of improvisation... More than ever it is, therefore, important to maintain a very high level of creative, musical education. '

— Yehudi Menuhin - ' *Great Masters of the Violin* ' by Boris Schwartz.

While Yehudi Menuhin bemoans the abject surrender to West, Paul Brunton draws attention with vehemence and sorrow to the multi-sided damage that is being caused :



' These artists, who are truly dedicated and occasionally truly inspired, will not be found in the contemporary mass movement of those who mistake their bizarre subconscious nonsense... Let these new art forms take their place for those who are attuned to them: let these forms coexist with the older ones. But let not the Good, the True and the Beautiful in the past be thrown aside and trampled on by intolerant innovation... Much Modern Art and poetry, music and literature is derived from sources that have nothing to do with genuine art. Neuroses, psychoses, imbalances and decadence itself are often its roots. '

Having given expression to his findings, fears and fulminations with conviction and clarity, eloquence and emphasis, Paul Brunton underscores the secret and significance of true art :

' What is the final call of true art ? Not to the work which expresses it but to the spirit which inspires it, the divine source of which it reminds us... The classical arts of several oriental countries served a double purpose for their better practitioners. They were professional means of earning a living and also part of a spiritual path. '

## PROMISCUITY

While Yehudi Menuhin regrets the loss of soul (and he has been a true admirer of Indian classicism), Paul Brunton refers to modernism, neo-classicism and the resultant promiscuity. The French Musicologist and Philosopher, Prof. Alain Daniclou lays bare the general trend stating :

' The present promiscuity in culture tends to create hybrid low standard by-products. We have today a sort of universal pie-music, universal pie-painting, universal pie-architecture... these belong to no culture. '

The loss of link and continuity with the basic culture and hybridisation demoralise, demolish and destroy oriental arts much more imminently because of the abject surrender to the onslaught of Western or other influences. A nebulous situation arises with Western, pseudo-modern, neo-classical systems vying with each other and in the effort destroying the spirit and soul of the ancient art. Prof. Dragotin Cretro of Yugoslavia dissects the underlying contradictions and hidden dangers thus ;

' **The connection between music and religion in Indian Culture differs from that in the West.** In India, secular music too was closely connected with religion and even nowadays the religious element is there. Since India and the West have developed two different social systems and two different cultures, their music too is of necessity different... Any adjustment in the sense of mutual equation between the two types of music is actually undesirable and might even be harmful. **The problem of hybridisation does not exist in Western music**, or at least not in the same sense as it does in the threatened non-Western types of music. This is a further reason why India should do all she can to preserve such a priceless heritage as her old classical music. '

Cretro draws pointed attention to the fact that it would be the Indian art which would commit *hara-kiri*. Self-reverence, self-control and self-respect should

dictate that the well-meaning advice is not ignored in the interest of the health and future of Indian music, the oldest of musical systems still vibrant.

' Let many a flower bloom ', ' Difference is the *sine qua non* of the times ', ' End stagnation, introduce variations ' and such slogans are easily circulated as a mark of progressiveness, which is in danger of drifting into adventurism. Differences - What do they signify and connote? Yehudi Menuhin too said so but what he means is different and it is to insure the health of Indian music as will be seen from his clear elucidation :

' We love each other not only for what we have in common but for the differences between us also... The very basic between man and woman depends on this difference.. so it is with all differences... We must concentrate on the importance of the differences between us. They bring us colour; they bring us variety... It is important for India to preserve the variety... One listens to Western music for entertainment. *The Indian approach is one of depth and continuity in time. In listening to and understanding music, there are two basic approaches - one of intellectual analysis and the other of empathetic or sympathetic transference of our perceiving personality into the other sphere.*'

(Emphasis supplied)

The difference is supplied by Carnatic v. Hindustani, by the subtle variations in voice, tempo, style, improvisation, varieties of compositions, ragas, talas, etc. In the name of importing, introducing differences, the structural basis ought not to be undermined and demolished. Pie-music (kichadi or avial type) which harangues and inflicts itself on the audience may provide momentary thrill to some but the ever-lasting benefit, cultural elevation and legacy will be sacrificed. Differences constitute the soul and essence of Indian music but they have to be within the portals of the system. Ludwig Pesch who had done much to study this during his training at Kalakshetra says :

' Music always transcends national, verbal, mental and philosophical limitations which account for its universal appeal beyond cultures... (But) comparison requires common features or parameters of which few are shared between Classical Carnatic music and genuine Classical Western music.'

What Peggy Glanville-Rice, an *avant-garde* composer, says is highly relevant:

' I threw out harmony... I began to realise that I had developed a musical organism very similar to the patterns of antiquity; a melody rhythm structure, a variable model raga and a multi-coloured rhythm element of greatly enhanced freedom. '

## MELODIC ORNAMENTATION

Transmitted orally through centuries, Indian music is, in essence, (in spite of all notations, codification and patterning of styles of rendition) improvised, innovative, gamaka and ornamentation-based unlike the Western counterpart, which was also once partly oral and traditional as seen from what Douglas

H. Leedy of Oregon states :

' It is known from various writers that good performers (of the West) added extempore embellishment to their vocal and instrumental line.... even in earlier periods performer improvisation was an important, indeed indispensable, part of the musical style... any well trained sixteenth century musician would improvise on the spot. '

Can a pianist of today vary the ornamentation of Beethoven sonata movement from that which is printed?

' The ideal answer must be "Yes"; but the practical answer seems to be "No",

affirms Leedy. Notation has dried up the springs and driven out the seeds of improvisation!

The cause for the basic exclusiveness and differences is mentioned by H.I. Koellr Cutter very succinctly thus :

' Two fundamentally differing sets of human genii and attributes of consciousness created two different musical traditions as complementary factors. We must learn to understand the world as a whole. '

There is a conscious effort towards this in the West. Says Narayana Menon:

' Many young composers in Europe and America are being attracted by the music of India. The subtlety of our melodic line, the complexity of our rhythms, the spontaneity of our music-making were to them like a breath of fresh air. '

Vivekananda too said so about Indian philosophy and spiritual endeavour a century back. While the 'balance of trade' in the export of Indian Classicism and import of everything else is not favourable to the Indian system, it should be mentioned that classical musicians continue to spread the art of India. For instance Ustad Ali Akbar Khan says :

' Indian music is like a river that has come down to us through time bringing nurture to man's soul... I started classes at California and Europe. I have had six thousand students across the world... My attitude and methods create an ashram-like atmosphere; there is a thread ceremony for initiating a newcomer into discipleship... '

No wonder Khan has been given a grant of Rupees ten crores for his efforts (*Vide* Part III). With all the homilies, a sincere admirer of the Indian Classical music may be inspired by the sincere and honest assertiveness of Amir Khushrau seven centuries back:

**' The musical system originated in India. And Indian music, the fire that burns heart and soul, is superior to the music of any other country. Foreigners, even after a stay of thirty or forty years in India, cannot play a single Indian tune correctly. '**

- In '*Nuh Siph'r*

This opinion is shared by many authorities. But apart from the truncated courses of Universities and other institutions, correspondence courses and classes on phone too flourish ! The Spirit of Indian music is caged in cassettes, notations, phone and other commercial auxiliaries. Should Yehudi Menuhin have to warn again that India is abandoning its own idiom, its own irreplaceable gift of improvisation and its high level of creative music?

\* \* \*

Prof. S.R. Janakiraman on perusing the above has this observation to make :

' A rare privilege and intellectual pleasure providing at the same time food for thought. It would certainly enable anyone to get a glimpse of the highly elevated mental plane of a good many sane thinkers on the subject spread throughout the world of music. A few sayings or statements are worthy of being engraved on metal lest they should perish by the frolic of time such as :

" What does sadden me, however, is the way in which with unseemly haste every tribe promptly abandons its own idiom... destroying their ancient irreplaceable gift... important to maintain a very high level of creative musical education." — Yehudi Menuhin.

The counter of Paul Brunton subscribed to the above thought too deserves mention as one from a judicious thinker. But there too Brunton does not fail to observe, "... let not the Good, the True and the Beautiful in the past be thrown aside and trampled on by intolerant innovation". Differences are the essence of Indian music but they have to be within the portals of the system. Ludwig Pesch gives expression to a great truth when he says, " Music always transcends national, verbal, mental and philosophical limitations which account for the universal appeal beyond cultures ". Peggy Glanville's quotation should not be missed by any inquiring mind engaged in a comparative appreciation of the subtleties of harmony and melody. '

I have placed before the discerning public the opinions of reputed authorities. Trends have no chartered course. Amidst the bewildering, aggressive pulls and counter-pulls, classicism is but a hapless leaf caught in the whirlpools of gushing waters in a river running down a steep gradient during a cyclone. None has any control over its destiny. Vempatti Chinna Satyam, the celebrated dancer, is reported to have expressed the view that classical arts are like water in a temple tank which needs continuous inflow of fresh water to serve its purpose. There ought to be no rigidity for tradition's sake. There is need for replenishment and revitalisation - an evolutionary process - to provide fresh vigour. But whether it needs to be regulated inflows into the Classical Reservoir or unregulated and uncontrolled flood waters which may even breach its bunds and empty the Reservoir of its classical waters is the issue. It offers no simple solution and is a rich field for intensive thought and research by reputed scholars, sober musicians and acknowledged musicologists. Result-oriented, effective action is certainly a crying need.

\* \* \*

## V

## JEALOUSY

## The Arch Destroyer

Far from our madding crowds, Swami Vivekananda wrote from Chicago on January 29, 1894:

"Three things are necessary to make every man great, every nation great:

- i. Conviction of the powers of goodness:**
- ii. Absence of jealousy and suspicion: and**
- iii. Helping all who are trying to be and do good.**

Why should the Hindu nation with all its wonderful intelligence have gone to pieces ?  
I would answer you,

## ‘ JEALOUSY ’.

Never were there people more wretchedly jealous of one another, more envious of one another's fame and name... Three men cannot act in concert together for five minutes... When will they learn not to be jealous !"

In subsequent letters, he regrets that jealousy is the bane of our national character and on March 19, 1894 confesses:

‘ We can get rid of everything, but not of that cursed jealousy.. That is a national sin with us... burning at heart at the greatness of others. "Mine alone is the greatness, none else should rise to it. "

## THE WORLD OF MELODY

That national sin not only pervades, but is more pronounced and intense in the world of artistes where merit and status are judged on varied factors of which glamour and the assertive character of ‘ Mine alone is the greatness ’ are not the least. It costs little; and it nurtures itself. The most favourite pastime is to nurse jealousy at other artistes' expertise, wisdom, voice, merit, status and, above all, luck. We have seen in ‘ *A Garland* ’ how the Father of Tamil Music Renaissance, Gopala Krishna Bharati suffered from the taunts and canards of the jealous and how Dwaram Venkataswami Naidu, the violin maestro had to face canards mothered by jealousy. The good samaritan-composer, S. Vedanayakam Pillai lost his job of translator in Tiruchirapalli Court having been falsely charged with loss of records secreted by colleagues in a box. Prof. P. Sambamurti mentions that when young Syama Sastri of the Trinity recited mantras musically in appropriate ragas at Sri Kamakshi Devi temple, Tanjore, a pleased devotee presented him with a costly shawl. A highly-elated Sastri ran to his first guru- uncle and prostrated before him paying obeisance. Jealousy touched the uncle to the quick. He flared up, tore Sastri's notes on musical lessons and threw them away. Of course, Sastri rose to the peak. History

chose to tear off the pages relating to the jealous uncle. K.V. Srinivasa Ayyangar (Tiger's brother) says that the main profession of many musicians is to find fault in others. A devout Dasi composed lullaby songs on Ramanuja who had 'initiated' her and was singing them melodiously. Govinda (later Acharyar Embar) who was passing by felt attracted and stood in the street enchanted by and absorbed in the music and the song - the Visishtadvaitin turning literally into an Advaitin for a moment, his heart and soul merging with soulful music. Even before he could reach Ramanuja, the tale that he spent much time in front of the Dasi's house had reached the master Ramanuja ! That is the world !

Note : That is the world! Yes. Here is an account of the great Oliver Goldsmith. 'The jealousy and envy, which, though possessed of many most amiable qualities, he frankly avowed, broke out violently... "We must be angry that a man has such a superabundance of an odious quality, that he cannot keep it within his own breast, but it boils over", stated Samuel Johnson adding that one should be angry with such a man !  
— Boswell.

## JEALOUSY AND GITA

Musical titans were able to marshal and bring to practice scriptural injunctions. Has not the Lord (Sri Krishna) restricted revelation of the greatest secret, the most profound knowledge to free oneself from the sorrows of life only to those who do not cavil or carp ? (Chapter IX-1 of *Gita*). Does He not call Arjuna *Anasuya* ?

## WHO IS ANASUYA ?

*Asuya* comprises belittling the merits of others, finding fault with their virtues, reviling them and attributing false blame to them. He who is entirely free of *asuya* is *anasuya*. In Chapter XVIII-67, the Lord lays down the rule that the secret gospel of the *Gita* should never be imparted to one who cavils or finds fault with HIM (*Abhyasuyathi*).

*Atrismriti* 34 states :

' He who does not distract from the merits of those possessing merits, praises even those of scanty worth and does not take delight in the faults of others is said to possess the virtues of *Anasuya*. '

(*Na gunan gunino hanti sthouthi mandagunanapi  
Nanyadosheshu ramate sanasuya prakirtitah.*)

Jealousy germinates slander. Some ignore it like Ben Johnson, who said:

' Thy praise or dispraise is to me alike;  
as one doth not stroke me, nor the other strike.'

And a century back, Swami Vivekananda warned Kali:

'Take not even the slightest notice of what puerile creatures say against you.  
Indifference indifference, indifference.  
Keep up the deepest mental poise.'

Stoicism befits the great and the yogi who could say that sticks and stones might break his bones but words would never hurt him. But what of the lesser mortals? Jealousy is said to be second nature to many an artiste. There is cure for illness but perhaps none for jealousy. Spiritual dedication to truth in thought, speech and deed is the only step.

'Let us wipe off first that mark which Nature always puts on the forehead of a slave - the stain of jealousy. Be ready to lend a hand to every worker of good. Send a good thought for every being in the three worlds !'

Swami Vivekananda gave to the members of Alambazar Math 'Ten Commandments on Management' of which one stipulates:

'Tale-bearing, caballing, or reporting scandals about others should be altogether eschewed.'

Gossips and factions, jealousies and heart-burning continue to haunt and tarnish lives of musicians. They have more than one association. Opportunities are reportedly cornered by an oligarchy in the fraternity. Genuine love and dedication to good causes rarely assert themselves before demoralisation becomes chronic unless the 'haves' give the lead.

Jealousy is at once intriguing and enchanting. It is self-nourishing and makes no demands. It accepts no defeat and failure only fuels. Rare virtues! Bidaram Krishnappa, who was forging ahead day by day, became the victim of treacherous practices resorted to by the jealous. They did not hesitate even to poison him ! Promising his mother Saraswati Bai never to eat or drink outside his house, he did not accept even a glass of milk. Jealousy and suspicion touched its peak soon. Vasudevacharya recounts the incident of Krishnappa offering a glass of milk to him in that vitiated atmosphere :

"I am not feeling hungry.'

'Well Acharya, I can quite imagine the doubt at the back of your mind. I shall take half of it first. Ten minutes later, if you are convinced of my integrity, you will drink it, I suppose.'

Both of us were in tears.

'Acharya, Do not trust the tale-carriers. If you can possibly tear open my heart, you may find out what regard I have for you !'

After that no misunderstanding was possible. Our hearts beat as one."

Jealousy, mother of crimes, had vitiated the atmosphere so much that the above incident had strangely occurred actually following a friendly dispute between Vina Seshanna and Bidaram Krishnappa as to who should garland Acharya and in the end the senior and guru Seshanna garlanded first and Krishnappa garlanded next! This provides a contrast in overt and covert feelings and dealings engineered by jealousy and suspicion.

A contrast can be gleaned from an old letter of M.B. Srinivasan to Veena Maestro Balachander (in the album of the latter):

" I was thrilled to read your letter, doubly because an 'angel of music' has come forward to give the 'devil' its due. It is very rare for even an ordinary musician to recognise talent in another musician. Such an outburst of appreciation from you only proves that you are not only a great musician but you have also a very broad heart and you are a genuine human being. "

— *Sruti* 68.

## DOES ART BANISH JEALOUSY ?

It does where love transcends base emotions. Magnificent art can annihilate germs of jealousy even in an enemy. Semmangudi Narayanaswami Ayyar and Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar were not on talking terms. Narayanaswami Ayyar was at the concert of the latter at Tiruvaigaru. It was exhilarating music. Overcome by emotion and forgetting personal estrangement, Narayanaswami walked to the vocalist and shedding tears embraced him and said,

' What great music. Your *Todi* was a veritable *Mohanastram* (Cupid's arrow)!  
How you sang and how delightfully !! '

Narayanaswami Ayyar walked back wiping his tears of exultation to resume and to be again an enemy ! (Source: Semmangudi Dr. Srinivasa Ayyar). He was a true artiste and his capacious heart accepted Art enforcing a truce for the duration of the concert; Art reigned supreme.

The historic contest at Trivandrum in the presence of Maharajah Ayilyam Tirunal went to three sessions; the Maharajah ultimately honoured both the contestants, Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar and Trivandrum Raghava Ayyar (*vide* page LIX of *A Garland*). Contest over, the senior Trivandrum maestro not only praised young Vaidyanatha and said, 'Who can sing like you ?' but expressed his desire to assimilate some of his brika styles in raga *Bhairavi* ! True Art can banish base emotions and even ego!

Not only that. Maharajah Ayilyam Tirunal laid aside royal prestige and status and sang before Vaidyanatha to secure his approbation; and expressed his admiration and respect to young Maha saying –



'If I am reborn, I wish to be reborn with you as brother'.

Here Art reigned and Royalty allowed itself to be ruled ! What a refinement in humility engendered by Art! He did not say, 'I wish to be reborn like you' but yields primacy to the artiste !!

'Earth has not anything to show more ennobling;  
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by  
Incidents so touching in their majesty.'

— After William Wordsworth.

Poet Gray comes to mind for his epigram 'The path of glory leads but to the grave'. Once, jealousy had hijacked a musician to the glory and throne too! Vembattur Picchu Ayyar was a delight as a musician and his knowledge of tamil was profound. Bhaskara Sethupati, Rajah of Ramnad admired and patronised him. Naturally jealousy has a just cause to play mischief. On an important occasion, when all the chairs in the Court were occupied, one of the jealous sent word to Picchu Ayyar. Promptly he arrived, saw his own seat occupied, surveyed the situation in a split second, walked up and sat with the Rajah on the broad royal seat ! To the stunned courtiers, he announced:

'I was called; my seat too had been occupied when I came. I concluded that the Rajah should have called me only to share his august seat.'

A smiling Sethupati declared:

'Till now, only the Maharajah knew what you are;  
now the *Arasaravai* (Court) also knows what you are!'

— Source: Ellarvi.

\* \*

T.S. Parthasarathy, the eminent musicologist, perusing the above, has minuted :

'Many eyebrows may be raised at this chapter but there is no gainsaying the fact that mutual envy among musicians pollutes the atmosphere. Rajagopalan has recounted a few incidents in which musicians got reconciled after an initial display of jealousy. Professional jealousy has gone to the extent of a father cutting off the thumb of his son who excelled him in veena play (*vide* page 401, *A Garland*). There is more *bonhomie* of sorts these days among musicians but there is still room for their pondering over Rajagopalan's comments on the problem of "jealousy".'

## VI

## NADOPASANA IS TRANSCENDENTAL BLISS

'*Nādōpāsānāya Dēva Brahma Vishnu* I  
*Bhavantypāsita minan'yesmadēte tadātmakāh* II

(Devoted practice of music, worshipping *Nada* (Absolute Sound) as the *Parabrahman* is indeed tantamount to worshipping the supreme deities Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara, since they are the very embodiment of *Nada*.)

— *Sangita Ratnakara (JMAM)*.

'*Ezhisaiyāi, Isaippayanāi, Innamudhāi, Ennudaiya Thōzhanāi*'.

(St. Sundarar describes God as the *Swaroopa* of the Seven Swaras and as the benefit of music...) Saint Ramalinga Swamigal affirms the same seeing in music the acme of Divine Presence.

Swami Dayananda Saraswati\* recalled the same on April 1, 1991 at the Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar Trust function at Madras thus:

'Elegant manodharma brings out the soul of music at concerts. Solemn tranquility reigns. The enraptured audience loses its individual and collective instincts and identities. Ego-centric thoughts disappear. Sparingly, an involuntary 'aha' or an 'oho' is whispered. More often, the collective will of the audience lacks the energy to muster strength even to air its appreciation. Drenched in captivating melody, the audience stays hypnotised, drowned in the ocean of classical music surrendering heart and soul so deep that it manages to mutter just a 'tsou', 'tsou'. Heart-beats synchronise with the tala. Minds strike total rapport with bhava and rasa and there is total identity and integration of minds, hearts and souls.

That spell marks the universal identity of the audience with '*Nada*'; it is '*Nadopasana*' in essence. It is transcendental bliss – losing oneself and getting dissolved in chaste, divine music. It is *Nada loludai Brahmananda* ('*Kalyana Vasantam*'). That is the overwhelming message of classical music pure and simple which neither neo-classical nor light music can hope to bestow.'

To those who desire corroboration or confirmation from Western authorities of this *Advaitic 'Nadopasana'* as means to attain Transcendental Bliss or see Divine Light, here they are as inscribed by Paul Brunton:

'Who can respond to the genius of Bach's Saint Mathew Passion unless some awakening of spirituality is in him?'

'Bach - the final chorus from St. Mathew Passion, Beethoven's last piano trio (Archduke), and

Note: \* A word about the Swamiji's golden heart. His laughter is contagious. 'It should seem he had been in a humour for jocularly and merriment; and upon such occasions I never knew a man laugh more remarkable in any circumstance in his manner.'

— (Boswell)

The slow movement from Mozart's G. Major Viol in Concerto, K.216 -  
 These three are spiritually inspired musical works. '

'Walter Allen says he got, at the age of fifty, the mystic experience of timelessness, saw the Divine Light in Vision and felt one with God while listening rapt in Beethoven's Seventh Symphony. '

Brahms himself said,

'When I reach my best level during the task of composition, I feel a higher power working through me.'

Paul Brunton provides his seal of finality when he declares:

'Handel's Messiah is as inspired a piece of music as any ever written. It is a communication from Heaven to earth, from the Gods to man. Handel sat for three days motionless. Then out of this physical and inner stillness there came to him the tremendously inspired, triumphantly majestic strains of the Messiah.'

These firm indications should set at rest vacillating souls in believing that of all arts, music is not only the loftiest and that its mysterious power speaks a language which is universally acknowledged, but it is motivated to express glimpses which Shelly called -

#### 'VISITATIONS OF THE DIVINITY IN MEN'.

Visitations of Divinity? Here is a specimen proof. Ludwig Van Beethoven (1770 - 1827) told a violinist who complained that a passage of his was unplayable,

'When I composed that, I was conscious of being inspired by God Almighty. Do you think I can consider your puny little fiddle when He speaks to me? '

#### DECADENCE :

The above leads to the issue whether such music is normally made available and whether such compositions continue to fill the Reservoir of Lofty Melody. The answer is generally believed to be 'No'. Robin Daniels wrote in his '*Conversations with Neville Cardus*':

'Music, the rich man's pleasure and the poor man's food must be related to the smells and the tastes of life'.

Musicians point to the ordinary man's level of participation and appreciation; and this 'ordinary man' would seem to be at the receiving end not only for politicians but for musicians too! 'The smells and the tastes' would seem to be deteriorating and demoralising progressively. It is the common view that present-day compositions are poor in conception, content, message and musical appeal. Neville Cardus said:

'The strange thing is that it is the oldest music which sounds the youngest today. You know the air is fresh very early in the morning. When there is dew on the grass and everything smells new and clean. The oldest music is like that.'

Martin Pacey has very poor opinion of the present and says:

'The emotional and spiritual aridity, the absence of vitality and warmth is the worst aspect of contemporary compositions.'

Of course, it may be the condition in the West. Let Lata Mangeshkar speak for Indian conditions in this sphere:

'Believe me when I say that there is no demand from the audience abroad for me to sing any of the present-day tunes. I enjoy singing yester year composers. And my enjoyment is doubled when I divine that this is what my audience too want... Today's composers concentrate on anything but their work... (they) fail to create tunes really worthwhile.'

The position is not different either in the sphere of Carnatic music.

'The quest for depth is just not there. Superfluous entertainment is today's menu. It is a pity that instead of delving deeper, we are concentrating on the frills which are evanescent and offer nothing more than a short-lived thrill.'

This is the view of top violinist M.S. Gopalakrishnan who hails from a musical family and who has a rich experience of Indian and Western conditions. The cry and need of the hour then is obviously to reorient our conceptions, attitudes, aspirations and programmes to restore '*Nadopasana*' to its pristine glory and resuscitate our rich legacy and glory by actively involving the 'ordinary man' in cities and villages as classical music has fast been withdrawing itself into an oligarchic shell which indeed is a curse!

\* \* \* \* \*

## SOFTWARE PIRACY

There is an 'Indian Federation Against Software Theft' (INFAST) to combat piracy. Tiger Varadachariar used to cut jokes that Vasudevacharya and M.D. Ramanathan had stolen his talents and knowledge. Madurai Mani Ayyar's style is beautifully brought to focus by T.V. Sankaranarayanan. Likewise the styles of G.N.B., etc. are projected by many. 'Touch *Todi* raga, there is an element of T.N. Rajarathinam's style; touch *Nilambari*, hah! there is the touch of S.G. Kittappa; *Mukhari* or *Anandabhairavi*? Musiri's style is on the fringe. These are treated not as piracy but as merit, attainment and a gift! Art confers that liberty!! The Lord has sanctioned it:

"Whatever a great man does,  
that other men also do' (imitate);  
Whatever he sets up as the standard,  
that the world follows."

\* \* \*



## VII

### CONTESTS AND CHALLENGES II

#### Historic contests between Classical Musicians of Eminence.

Chapter X of '*A Garland*' provides an account of important contests and challenges in the annals of Carnatic music. Since such contests have a close and interesting bearing and revelation on men, matters and conditions in the past, a few more are brought to view here.

### AA

#### Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar & Kalyanakrishna Bhagavatar

Maharajah Ayilyam Tirunal was not only a patron and connoisseur but was a musician of repute himself. In tune with the proverbial 'approval from the mouth of Sage Vasishta', he wanted to have his musical attainments and talents screened by Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar during his visit. The Maharajah sang elaborating '*Useni*' raga for forty-five minutes. Captivated by the brilliance and maturity of the rendition, Ayyar observed:

' Thank God. He has made you a king. Were it not so,  
we might not have had an occasion to touch the drone'

This cultured ruler wanted to enjoy a vocal-veena 'friendly' contest between Ayyar, famous for his vibrant gamaka-laden voice and his Court artiste Veena Kalyanakrishna Bhagavatar, who enjoyed immense expertise by virtue of rigorous training. Expertise and mastery were a gift to Ayyar but an acquisition to Bhagavatar, famous for his 'origai' gamakas. His veena play resembled vocal rendition. The vocal-veena contest commenced very well. Taking up *Todi* raga, Ayyar flashed through and shot up from *Mandhra sthayi Shadja* to *Atitara sthayi Shadja* like a fired jet and called halt after a hurricane rendition. Bhagavatar lacked the fire of that tempo and the lure of the conjuring voice. His heart sank; and sank as only that of a senior, eminent, noble artiste was capable of. His reputation too was at stake. The understanding musician-ruler (even as saint Sambandar consoled Tiruneelakantar when the latter was not able to reproduce on yazh his vocal rendition) stepped in to soothe Bhagavatar's feelings saying that Ayyar's music was vocal and veena was not designed to play so fast by changing from mandra to panchama and then to sarani strings. Ayyar also comforted him saying that it was only 'an exhibition match' and that he had all respect for his mature rendition and knowledge. Bhagavatar came to his elements and played on. Was it the forerunner to modern jugalbandis?

## BB

### Peria Vaithi's Challenge

Peria Vaithi and Chinna Vaithi were an acknowledged prominent duo when Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar appeared on the horizon and made his triumphal entry. The brothers hailed from Radhamangalam and were Court musicians at Sivaganga. Peria Vaithi once went to Travancore to exhibit his musical expertise and solve his economic plight. As was the custom at Travancore for all artistes, he got accommodation and food adequately. As he could not get an audience, he lost his mental poise and started singing in '*Bhoopalam*' at midnight in desperation to contain and annihilate mental agony and prepare to return home. The classical rendition of the dawn raga in the still hours of the midnight fascinated the musically-sensitive ears of Ayilyam Tirunal Maharajah. Enquiries revealed that as the artiste had become an addict to 'drinking', he was not 'listed' for audience. The ruler condoned the fault and heard him that day. Exhilarant music full of bhava cascaded from the emotionally aggrieved Peria Vaithi who enjoyed a resonant powerful voice which could negotiate 3½ octaves in three tempos. Dramatically he stopped and requested permission to take 'the drink'. The Ruler and the Court were stunned by the insulting indecorous behaviour. The Ruler's benevolent heart, however, condoned it and permitted the unseemly act too! The artiste violated the sanctity of the Court and Royal presence but what followed was thrilling rendition - a *quid pro quo*, a *prayaschitta*!

Suddenly he stopped again and challenged all and everyone to sing like him. The ruler magnanimously persuaded him to resume. The interludes only helped to whip up the classical nerves and verve of Vaithi's music. And when it ended, the misbehaviour and atrocious acts were graciously forgotten. Ayilyam Tirunal not only exhibited his munificence in gifts but revealed his royal stoic magnanimity telling Vaithi that the palace gates were open to him again!

( Source: V.S. Gomatisankara Ayyar in '*Isaikalai Vallunarkal*' )

## CC

### Maha v. Venu

Bobbili Kesavayya, Kundrakudi Krishna Ayyar and Venugopala Dasa Naidu belonged to a category of musicians who combined capability and fame with aggressive egocentricity. Venugopala Dasa assumed striking titles like 'Sura Veera, Veerasura, Kantamani' indicating arresting rendition and expertise in swara, raga, tanam and pallavi. The title 'Kantamani' was earned by passing a test at Sivaganga successfully. He kept an elaborate retinue, an arresting paraphernalia. Very popular and a crowd-puller, he travelled in a two

horse-drawn phaeton. Admirers fuelled his craze for fame and animosity against excellence in others. Shatkalapidi Photo Masilamani and friends collected Rs. two thousand (a century and half ago; money-value is relevant) as stake and Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar was challenged. Venue was Fiddle Ramayya's house near Snuff Shanmugham's house at Madras. Venugopala had sharpened his specialisation in major ragas to knock out Ayyar. But Fiddle Venkoba Rao sensing it tactically forced Ayyar, by leading rendition, to take up '*Narayanagoula*'. Venugopala was floored and Photo Masilamani had to declare Ayyar victor. It is stated that Ayyar's brother, Ramaswami Sivan whispered to his brother in '*Pandava Basha*' clear only to them both, thus:

*'Kapibhakshappis Kama apagesuthis  
Yanthō ehayan ashahitho vandhalabhaayiha  
Kōn vasha vasha yanthō nooh ankisan  
Hithō Kisaimishoopaz  
Kōnvashavashathassahiru chipaz.'*

V.S. Gomatisankara Ayyar says that this meant :

*'Take Adi Tala, anaghata eduppu.  
Sambho Siva Sankara Vibho, etc. '*

The mutual admiration, respect and love between the Ayyar brothers are proverbial. Venu's carefully drawn up and elaborately arranged-for scheme crumbled and collapsed like a house of cards and the prize-presentation was made with Venu disappearing from the scene ! (Such absence is misconduct perhaps only in tennis ! Here is a parallel from sports. The legendary Indian wrestler Gama took on Stanislaus Zbyszko, the Polish reigning world champion on December 12, 1910. Gama looked ordinary in the presence of the tall, impressive Pole. Gama was dominant but two hours 40 minutes' play ended in a draw. At the appointed time on the next day, **the Pole was nowhere to be seen**. Gama was declared the Champion and the world learnt to acknowledge his invincibility. Later, on January 28, 1920, Gama prostrated Zbyszko in just 21 seconds at Patiala!)

## DD

### Pallavi Subbiah Bhagavatar v. Tirumalai Ayyangar

Subbiah Bhagavatar hailed from Vasudevanallur near Sankarankoil and had training under Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar for seven years. Very competent in giving concerts rich in neraval and an expert in pallavi rendition and swara, he was very popular and was supported by zamindars. Gomatisankara Ayyar is his son. Bhagavatar stopped giving concerts at the age of thirty-five and spent his time in training disciples. An expert laya vidwan, once he demonstrated before the Karaikudi Veena Brothers *Sankarabharana* elaborately for a hundred and

fifty minutes with his '*kalpana*' (improvised) tala comprising *Eka* tala in the first part with 16 *matras*, *Jampai* in the second with ten *matras*, *Rupaka* in the third with twelve and *Chapu* in the fourth with fourteen totalling fifty-two for an *avartha*. To the astounded Brothers, he stated that it could be called '*Brahma*' tala. He enjoyed a ringing tone and a captivating style.

Tirumalai Ayyangar of Anmarai Nadu near Srivilliputtur was a disciple of Poochi Srinivasa Ayyangar. Had a mellifluous voice, was held in esteem and was very popular in the South for his eminence in raga, tana and pallavi exposition.

People of the area developed a passion to see the two distinguished men of the area together in a concert displaying their skill in a 'friendly contest' and arranged for it. Tirumalai started with his composition '*Aazh Kadalai*' in *Todi* with *Misra Triputa* tala. Bhagavatar wondered why he chose that tala as it might not be conducive to full-scale pallavi. The sahitya (text) also was word-intensive. However he responded. Tirunelveli Syamala Bhagavatar was on violin and Tirunelveli Gomati was on mridangam. The contest was continued on the second day. Bhagavatar started with *Bhairavi Thvijam-Kanda Chappu Misra Chapu* combination on sahitya '*Koodara Girilolan*'. Tirumalai got confused in his rendition due to the devilous combination of five and seven tala aksharas alternating. He regretted the indulgence he had taken on the first day and apologised to Bhagavatar for his avoidable innovations .

## EE

### Mysore Kuppiah v. The Jealous Ensemble

Mysore Kuppiah and Appaiah, ancestors of Seshanna and Subbanna, could not get admittance to the Tanjore Court and stooped to secure it. They enrolled themselves as pupils under Chinnavelu and Periavelu, Court musicians. After sometime, when the ruler saw them with the teachers and enquired, they revealed their identity and intent. The ruler retained them both with him. Four senior musicians, enraged at this, composed a varna in *Ata* tala each composing one *avarta*. Kuppiah got scent of it and got the varna secretly notated in full. Unaware of this, the quartette challenged Kuppiah Brothers when the ruler summoned a special *darbar* to honour Kuppiah. They pleaded that the Brothers were cheats and that their depth of learning should be tested. They played the varna thrice and pompously demanded of Kuppiah to play the same varna in *trikala*. Kuppiah took his vina, started with the *trikala* as the basic *kala* and played at treble that tempo too. He played on till midnight too. Mysore Vasudevacharya says that the ruler performed *kanakabhisheka*, presented him with a silver veena inlaid with pearls and granted *Kabisthalam* as *Jagir*!



A brief war of wits with a *swarakshara* pallavi ensued. Overwhelmed by the gesture of the ruler, Kuppiah composed instantaneously a pallavi in *Mohana* raga '*Paga icchara Sariga*' meaning 'Is it right that the ruler should present a zari turban of honour?' The connoisseur-artist in the ruler countered it in soft notes, '*Sada Paga icchane*', meaning that it was only an ordinary turban. The notes pa, ga, sa, ri, ga, sa, da, pa and ga are all brought in. (*Swarakshara edhir pallavi* is related in Mohanam Krishnier's life too. A *Swarasthana Varnam* of Muthuswami Dikshitar finds place in part III - E.)

## FF

### Rising sun saves the honour of court

Sivaratri was celebrated with a music festival at the palace with the fasting Maharajah Krishnaraja Wodeyar presiding over it. Pallavi used to be the tool of contest. A senior visiting vidwan first sang a pallavi. The Court vidwans could not meet the challenge and their response was hesitant. The Maharajah gave expressssion to his anguish and pain stating that the competition had brought disgrace to Mysore instead of prestige, entertainment and enlightenment. Chikkarama rose up and said that his son Seshanna would give a proper response. The precocious boy gave a scintillating pallavi remarkably well and took everybody by surprise.

Wodeyar took him on his lap and said, 'Guard this precious jewel. I am sure he will earn our State ever-lasting fame. But you should not have exposed him today like this'. To ward off evil-eye, Vasudevachar mentions that the ruler himself arranged for *idugavy* and presented him with a necklace and shawl. Seshanna rose to the top and was a powerful musician in the Mysore Court.

### Note:

The ruler's advice 'Guard this precious jewel' brings to mind an incident in Subramania Bharati's life. During his visit to Madras, Gandhiji was having a discussion with Rajaji and others. Bharati rushed in like a dart straight and asked:

'Mr. Gandhi, can you come up for a meeting?'

A startled Gandhiji stared at Rajaji, politely declined on ground of want of time; and when Bharati had left, as brusquely as he entered, told Rajaji –

'Take care of this gem'.

**Quite strangely, the revolutionary gem of Ettayapuram lived for just 38 years and the musical gem of princely Mysore for double that - 76 long years!**

## GG

**Bidaram Krishnappa v. The Malignant**

Bidaram Krishnappa was riding at the crest of his glory. At Bangalore he was deservedly honoured. There was immediate jealous reaction and heart-burning. An assembly of vidwans and public was convened at Mysore which included a well-known South Indian musician according to Mysore Vasudevachar who recounts the incident. Bidaram's guru Seshanna spoke:

'Krishnappa, it appears that the people at Bangalore have proclaimed you a Mahavidwan. It is left only to vidwans like us to confer such a distinction. You are required to sing before us now in this distinguished assembly and earn the distinction.'

The South-Indian vidwan (name not mentioned by Acharya) sang a six aksharakala pallavi he had practised for six long months and challenged Krishnappa to sing a few avartanas of neraval and swaras. Burning with rage, Krishnappa told his guru,

'Guruji, all that I have is due to your kind blessings. I shall obey your command and accept the challenge, but on condition that immediately I do it, I shall frame a pallavi here and now and this vidwan should respond'.

With that Damocles' sword of '*edhir pallavi*' promised, he went through the pallavi with merit and distinction and asked, 'Now, what about my challenge?'

Seshanna embraced his disciple and said with emotion:

'Krishnappa, really you are a Gana Kesari (Lion in Music). I made you sing only to prove your worth to those who were talking behind your back'.

This should have drawn the curtain on the challenge. Deep-rooted jealousy lacks capacity to wind up but fuels endless encounters. The jealous vidwan took advantage of the conferment of the title 'Gayakasikhamani' on Krishnappa sometime later by the Head of Tiruvidaimarudur Mutt and issued a notice of challenge from his address - No. 136, Mint Street, Madras under date June, 7 1905 with copies to the Mysore Maharaja and the Mutt Head too. Promptly on June 12, 1905 Krishnappa replied to him that knowledge is immeasurable, that titles are not won after undergoing tests at vidwat sadas or sabhas, that Mysore people were at a loss to recognise the notice-giver even as a vidwan as he himself had been present at the concert at Tiruvidaimarudur and had not chosen to raise any objection then and that it was regrettable that he had not taken a lesson from the earlier encounter. Presumably, the jealous energy and fire had evaporated on receipt of the retort. There was no response.

## HH

### Friendly Challenges

#### A

As a contrast, it is but proper and legitimate to record a few friendly challenges. There was a Sangita Sammelan at Tanjore. Narayanaswami Nayakar was a scholar, connoisseur and patron of musicians. There assembled at his house the cream of visiting musicians of the day like Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar, Tirukkodikaval Krishna Ayyar, Veena Seshanna, Ghanam Raghaviah, Sarabha Sastri and Srivilliputtur Muthiah Bhagavata. Anxious to enjoy their competitive music, Nayakar displayed a diamond ring to be presented to the 'best musician of the day'. Probably selecting the 'Man of the Match' in cricket derived inspiration from such episodes!

Vaidyanatha Ayyar started the rendition and others followed. But who was to get the prize and who was to decide it? Nayakar left it to the vidwans as he did not desire to lose the feast by acting as a judge. Better to enjoy as a rasika than sweat as an actor! There were some tense moments of suspense. Finally Muthiah Bhagavata stumped and foreclosed the issue declaring that the hero of the day was Seshanna. Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar seconded it. Seshanna accepted it modestly saying, 'I accept this as a blessing from elders'. The titans of Tamil Nadu elected the budding artiste from Karnataka! Art has no barriers!! Art integrates.

#### B

Once the Maharajah of Travancore wanted to hear his palace vidwan Veena Kalyanakrishna Bhagavata and Vina Seshanna at one sitting. Bhagavata played first for two hours and then Seshanna responded. As it happened at the contest of Maha Vaidyanatha - Haripada Raghava Ayyar contest, the ruler presented them with similar honours. But the learned Bhagavata rose up and said:

'May I confess that Sharada Devi has blessed Seshanna with all that is sweet in veena and she was left only with the remnant to bless me with! I have never before heard such an exquisite performance and I doubt whether I would hear another such again.'

Jealousy is a stranger at assemblages where nobility and pure devotion to art compete! Has not Bhagavata crowned himself with glory by the noble sentiments he gave expression to?

## II

### Bana's wife v. Eelam Belle

Males have monopolised the listed contests so far. Here is one from the 'Tiruvilayadal Puranam' to 'fill up seats reserved for women'. Let this be a **women's event** as such a contest does not appear to have been held elsewhere.

The *belle amie* of Rajaraja Pandian of Madurai was burning (quite naturally) with a desire to put to disgrace Banabhadra's wife, a scholarly poetess. Carried away by the coquetry of his lady (presumably a pretty woman-*beaux yeux*), Pandian requisitioned a competent lady-musician from Eelam, Sri Lanka. At the contest, Bana's wife excelled but the King's decision followed the nod of his lady-love. The loyal courtiers religiously nodded 'yes' to what the puppet Pandian said. The second contest went the way the first did. Bana's wife was aghast and challenged the ruler to hold the third and final contest at the temple. Once within the temple, native wisdom, spiritual freedom and severance from lust restored sanity. Once sanity had asserted itself, the decision rightly went in favour of Banabhadra's wife. Generosity dictated honouring both since Pandian was promoter and accomplice to the drama.

The anecdote however reveals -

- i. Antiquity of musical contests;
- ii. Impartiality within the precincts of a holy place:  
(surely the courtiers should have continued to nod 'Yes, Your Majesty'); and
- iii. Distinction of women in music.

In fact, on the first day, the Eelam artiste shoots many questions on musicology revealing the depth of her immense knowledge in theory too. (One should thank Pandian for not awarding the contest to the Eelam belle on the plea of having won two games to one !)

## JJ

### Music Unites and Estranges too

The last one is from a Purana. Now follows one from the fascinating tamil epic the marvellous Çilappadikaram of Ilango, which is a **mixed event** where two lovers are caught up in the cobwebs or quagmire of unintended antagonism in trying to outplay each other.

Venue : Poompuhar Sea-shore.      Time : Indra Festival.

After taking part in the festival, Kovalan and his sweet-heart Madhavi, a damsel of bewitching, ravishing beauty and danseuse, repair to a shady place nearby. Madhavi takes the yazh, runs her nimble fingers on the kodu, the dandi,

checks up the tone and looks up with her native coquetry to know her lover's pleasure and preference. Kovalan missing the hint takes over the yazh and with it the hidden hand of Fate and plays to 'please' her and incidentally to seal their separation. 'His tonic "*Kural*" was the open note of the yazh. Madhavi mistakes the fifth "*illi*" as the fundamental suggesting a discordant note ! Jealousy leads to ire and confrontation takes over control. She takes back the yazh with a shade of vilely smile but to hit back; and plays. 'Her voice followed the humming guts like the shadow that trails closely along as the eagle flies aloft. Her troubled mind decoyed her into an unmelodic scale.' Burning with intense jealousy and torn by baseless suspicion, for the first time Kovalan's mind travels far and dwells on his forelorn chaste wife whom he discarded and deserted unceremoniously at the very hour the wedding bells sounded. The finest epic proceeds with Kovalan, now in utter penury, leaving with his devout wife to Madurai to meet the Grecian tragic fate. The innocent man is falsely charged with theft and is given capital punishment. **All because of music ! A head for a false note?**

## KK

### Nannu Miya v. Pallavi Somu Ayyar

The above incidents revolve around vocalists and instrumentalists. The series is brought to a close with the challenge of a percussionist extended to a pallavi supremo. Nannu Miya and Chotu Miya were Samasthanam artistes of the erstwhile Pudukottai State. Nannu was a gifted player on dolak and his '*Paran*' displays were fascinating. Spurred by his attainments, he challenged musicians to match his accompaniment and score over him. Some sulked; some sneaked away; some advised him that Pallavi Somu Ayyar was his peer. To establish his mettle, Nannu repaired to Talajnayar near Tiruthuraiipoondi and hurled his challenge. Though taken unawares, the pallavi expert accepted it. He composed a special pallavi for the contest in raga *Saveri* thus:

'Girrani palukuna Nandi mridangamaina.'

(It is not possible to produce the sound effect GRRR even if the mridangam used happens to be that of Nandikeswara.)

Traversing a classic alapana, Ayyar commenced the pallavi exposition. The deliberate sarcastic sahitya (text) which gets repeated endlessly held out a psychological unnerving portent for the percussionist even as Maharaja Sallian's derisive, scathing comparisons with Arjuna had on the indomitable Karna on the battle field of Kurukshetra in Mahabharata. The GRRR sound could not be aptly brought out on dolak. Nannu licked the dust. (Pallavi is a challenge to percussionists even normally since the pallavi vidwan holds the commanding rein and dictates the trends and is rarely dictated to. When two discordant colossuses meet, there could be an explosive situation and one such was that

Differences did crop up at a concert and they never shared a dais thereafter. It was parting of the ways. Pallavi is now following the path taken by gurukulavasa and quite soon might qualify for an elegy!)

\* \*

Note: Dr. R. Kalaikovan writes that there is a very beautiful and rare sculpture of a music competition between a male artiste and a female artiste relating to the Sangam Age at the temple of Nalthunai Ishwarar in Ponsai village. The sculpture is of pre-Rajaraja Chola period. *Vide* notes under the chapter 'Tamil Isai'.

\* \* \* \* \*

### DESTINY

The proverb runs,

‘Destiny leads the willing;  
but drags the unwilling.’

The biographical notes on Harikesanallur Muthiah Bhagavatar, Mysore T. Chowdiah, Dr. U.Ve. Swaminatha Ayyar and others reveal how true the proverb is. Raja Ravi Varma, the prince among Indian artists, was a candidate for consort to the royal princess. Maharajah Ayilyam Tirunal, the enlightened Ruler of Travancore, rejected his case ‘as he was a shade too dark’.

Raja Ravi Varma used to reminisce in later days how good the decision was and how destiny had helped him in that. He rose to be the uncrowned king in the field of art. He was not a ‘Rajah’ in the true sense but was called so from the beginning, how and why none knows! His drawing of Saraswati and Lakshmi revolutionised the innermost corners of India, in effect next only to those of Ramayana and Mahabharata. Had he painted Saraswati with a violin, imagine what would have been the effect!

\* \* \*

### ADMINISTRATION and MELODY

Govinda Dikshitar, Achyutappa Nayak and some others are well known for their administrative calibre and eminence in the field of music. Ajit Kumar Panja, Union Minister sang while inaugurating the Tiruvaiyaru Aradhana and Bangarappa, Karnataka Chief Minister sang at the Panchakshari Gandag. Jayalalitha, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, an accomplished artiste, could have sung likewise with merit and acclaim while inaugurating the Festival of the Music Academy, Madras 1991-1992 but chose to give a scholarly speech pregnant with thoughts. *Vide* extracts elsewhere.

\* \* \*

## VIII

### PURANDARA DASA CHALLENGED

'If gold could be found with fragrance, it is Tyagaraja, Kshetragna, Purandara Dasa and Jeyadeva', remarked the eminent scholar Dr.V. Raghavan. Tyagaraja immortalised Purandara in his *Prahalada Bhakti Vijayam*. Purandara stands 'unapproached as the supreme leader of the science no less than the art of music'. Four centuries have passed and yet he remains the *Sangita Pitamaha*. None could unseat him from that pedestal.

He has given expression in his '*Vasudeva Namavali*' to an achievement of his:

'I shall briefly describe, by the grace of Vyasaraya,  
the Namavali of Vasudeva:

\* \* \* \* \*

Thus altogether four lakhs and seventy-five thousand kritis has  
Purandara Vithala Vyasa Muni caused to be sung.'

He gives a break-up of the categories of songs leading to the total leaving twenty thousand to be accounted for probably as miscellaneous songs like a sincere, conscientious accountant. This claim had been accepted all along and none had challenged it till a reviewer of my *A Garland* remarked thus:

'The author's love of music and respect of musicians infuses the entire book. While this is unexceptionable and surely makes for interesting reading, it does mean that a legend is quoted without an attempt to look at its credibility. Purandaradasa is credited with composing 475000 songs...'

The issue raised is quite pertinent. The critic obviously should disbelieve the Purandara claim as he calls it a legend.

#### CREDIBILITY, CAPABILITY & CAPACITY:

It was Uttiramerur; 1961 was the year. O.V. Alagesan brought a devout poet to the temple. The poet went on pouring out *extempore* compositions on God for hours and astoundingly repeated them too for a check up ( even as Tyagaraja did on his return from his pilgrimage to ensure authenticity). I was present ( at Uttiramerur, not Tiruvaiyaru). I was reminded of Mozart's words, 'My whole soul is on fire'. The poet and his ilk are on fire, inspired and in a trance not infrequently and this cannot be fully understood by mundane man. What is improbable to the ordinary is child's play to the inspired genius.

Gavaskar, Hadlee, Bradman, Pele, Navratilova and Borg have shown

achievements absolutely beyond the capacity and comprehension of the multitude. Sergei Bubka soars to 6.12 meters in pole vault effortlessly. The United States of America and Allies destroyed thousands of men in the short span of three days losing just a score of men themselves in the Gulf War. Hiroshima achieved what scores of earthquakes had not. Miracles do happen. Whatever Purandara uttered was music. Praise of the Lord was his singular occupation when he moved out of his home on his life - mission for four decades with his devout wife and sons who played the role Vinayaka did for Vyasa on pilgrimage. The learned **Justice** T.L. Venkataramayyar writes:

'Purandaradasa states (the learned Judge does not use the word "claims") that he had composed 4.75 lakh songs. This by itself an astonishment, becomes all the greater when the quality of the songs is examined ... simple language, homely sayings and proverbs...'

### AUTHORITY TO QUESTION:

Can the author of a biographical dictionary indulge in the luxury of attempting to verify such an issue and do justice? Ramakrishna Paramahansa remarked:

'A salt doll went to the sea to measure its depth.  
The minute it plunged into the sea, it was dissolved.'

'What is the use of asking how many palm trees are there or  
how much toddy is in the shop  
when one cannot take more than a cup?'

When dozens of authorities had mentioned Dasa's claim all along without casting a shadow of doubt, could one in a biographical dictionary choose to cast doubts on the claim and take up original research? If this is taken, what about Tyagaraja's recitation of Ram Nam ninety-six crore times and Saint Tirugnana Sambandar singing '*Todudaiya Sevia*n' at the age of three? Ravi Kiran, Shashank and many others are credited with precocious talents: Can they all be challenged? Can each such issue be put to strict screening in a dictionary or can they be thrown out as incredible, improbable and impossible? One would be guilty of over-simplification to say 'yes' or 'no' or even to give an oracular finding. An old folly could be cited as an instance of such an approach:

Advocate: 'Have you stopped beating your wife?'  
(Witness falters, flounders, objects and tries to clarify.)  
Advocate again: 'I don't want your stories. Say yes or no.'

It is incorrigible to insist on so since both are shorn of truth but this is done. The book *A Garland* seeks to escape from this tragic practice of over-simplification.

### THE NORM:

'It is the truthfulness and the information of the so-called authority that are in question; and this question the historian has to answer for himself, on his own authority. Even if



he accepts what his authorities tell him, therefore, he accepts it not on their authority but on his own; not because they say it, but because it satisfies his criterion of historical truth. '

And the contra is also held out :

' The historian, however long and faithfully he works, can never say that his work is done once for all. '

— R.G. Collingwoor in '*The Idea of History*'.

The norm demands a firm, unequivocal statement from the biographer and the historian, it is true. The historian takes into account a variety of factors such as -

Commonsense, Credibility, Probability, Capacity, Capability, Feasibility, Evidence, Space, Period, Time, Status and Integrity of the source and Image of the actor in question.

## POSITIVE APPROACH:

Purandara claims it and the song is extant. His claim has been repeated and sustained during the last four centuries. The poet is hailed as a saint. His syllabus has not been altered nor sought to be altered still. His image is supreme. He is called '*Pitha Maha*' and an avtar of Narada. Concert halls and dances and bhajans resound with his songs hailed by Vyasa as '*Purandaropanishad*'. Institutions are named after him and festivals are celebrated in his honour.

Further:

'In most cases, the authentic picture of many celebrated and venerable figures gets into a maze of myths and anecdotes. But these, as handed down by tradition, are NOT to be ignored but understood, for they represent the IMAGE that these great artists had created in the minds of the people and the VALUE that the people saw in their lives and contributions.'

— Dr. V. Raghavan  
(Emphasis supplied)

So, one can ill-afford to side-line his claim. To ignore it is to demolish the image so fervently created and nursed through centuries; and set at naught the immense faith and value musicians and music-lovers attach to Dasa and the inspiration they draw from his compositions. If one were to disbelieve his specific claim, can he still be called a Saint ? That is the crux of the issue. It does not stop at that. The credibility of many - big and great - shall also be in jeopardy. Vyasaraya said,

'If ever there was a Dasa, it is Purandara Dasa'.

Should not such statements too be discarded? Sambandar, Appar and

Sundarar are credited with singing 49000, 38000, 16000 padikams but only 383, 312 and 100 are now available. Considering their total devotion, scholarship, poetical talents, can anyone still say that they could not have sung more than what are now available? Likewise Arunagirinathar is credited with singing sixteen thousand but only 1360 are available. Their devotion was so complete, their capability (*asukavi*) was so superhuman, that they are seen to be human Amazons coming down the Niagara Falls on the Atlantic Ocean; and their only mission and occupation were to spread spirituality. The man who has seen only the Silver Cascade is apt to deny that Niagara Falls comes down heavily from a height of over forty-five meters (Angel Waterfalls, Venezuela has a height of 1000 metres.) It is subjective.

I consulted Senior Musicologist Prof. S.R. Janakiraman and he was good enough to remark after profound thinking:

"In music, it is a peculiar phenomenon that more than one composer of a particular stock has adopted the same *vaggeyakara* mudra. In the Dikshitar family, except Ramaswamy Dikshitar, the rest including Subbarama Dikshitar, why even the eldest of the Tanjore Quartette, Ponniah Pillai, had adopted 'Guruguha' as their mudra. A great number of spurious compositions under the stamp of Guruguha have also flooded the music world. Similarly it is possible that several Karnataka Composers had their signature as Purandara or Purandara Vittala. Such being the case, could not 'Purandara Dasa' just have represented the entire Dasakuta who have sung in praise of Vasudeva in such large numbers? Father, son and grandson, these three contributed the Tallapaka compositions and all had Venkatesa as the synonym. Their songs number 32000 out of which only 12000 could be unearthed on copper plates - solid and imperishable evidence. So long as there has been no Bhagavata sampradaya or a Geya sampradaya, the songs being transmitted from mouth to mouth, it looks immaterial and is of no avail to ponder over the possibility or otherwise of a mammoth number of songs composed by anyone single composer."

He has further made the following thought-provoking observations:

'Excepting for a reference, almost casual so it looks, by Subbarama Dikshitar, there is no documentary evidence to show that Purandara Dasa was the acclaimed primordial teacher of music who drafted an unquestionably uniform syllabus never possible in music. It is only an *anumana pramana* as one of the dozen musicologists of Karnataka has himself admitted such a fact. When even in the case of the kritis of Tyagaraja for the most part, not so much in the case of Dikshitar, there has been an unwarranted diversification of *patantara* -version of rendition between one school and another, why even between one musician and another, how are we to vouchsafe the authenticity, credibility, capability and capacity, and above all, being the most important one - human, physical possibility of the mortal composer with all due devotion to the divine minstrels commissioned on the earth. With all their divine calibre, they were also only human beings and proved themselves mortal though subsequently immortal by means of what they have left behind to have composed in such thousands?

With due respect to the learned Professor, I think that Purandara Dasa cannot in this instant case be taken as representing a family or clan of composers as his song is unequivocally personal. A copy of the song is annexed. It is the

personal claim of Purandara ! There is no case to orate ‘ **Dasa was an honourable saint ; but I do not believe his song** ’.

In fine, one has to bow with respect and admiration to the greatest of Dasas for his incredibly large, prodigious output, for his immortal contributions and for his saintliness. And with determination and dedication, may a search for the missing songs be instituted !

Search ? Search for his songs after four centuries and three decades ? Will it not be a wild goose chase - running after a mirage ? No, it need not be. Annamacharya's songs were found hidden in Tirupati temple. Tamil hymns were found secreted in the temple vaults at Chidambaram and salvaged in parts. ‘*Chaturdandi Prakasikai*’ of Venkatamakhin was secreted for over a century during troublous times. Dr. U.Ve. Swaminatha Ayyar was able to bring back to life scores of ancient tamil literature like *Çilappadikaram* after centuries. Marvellous pieces of sculpture have been recovered from the safe, vast bosom of earth. The author himself has taken possession as an official of treasure troves of icons of bewitching beauty and matchless workmanship at Pattiswaram, etc. Ancient, pre-historic township remnants are being unearthed at Poompuhar, Mohenjadar, Harappa and many other sites. So there is every chance of unearthing a sizeable number of Purandara Dasa's output of kritis if not the whole of them.

May institutions and music-lovers get interested and take the challenge !

\* \* \* \* \*

### RETORT

Venue: Madras Music Academy.

Year: 1933.

E. Krishna Ayyar:

What Nayana, it appears you are frightening  
your accompanists!

Kanchipuram Nayana Pillai,  
Vocal Maestro :

Then, shall I allow them to frighten me?

— T. Sankaran.

Note: Konerirajapuram Vaidyanatha Ayyar had senior laya specialists Manpoondia Pillai on the hitherto unknown kanjira and Dakshinamoorti Pillai on mridangam with Malaikottai Govindaswami Pillai on violin - all stalwarts. T. Sankaran says that this was sneered at as ‘Magistrate Court’. This yielded to ‘Full Benches’ of Nayana Pillai, Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar, Chittoor Subramania Pillai, Madurai Somu, Sirkazhi Govindarajan and now Mandolin Srinivas and Kunnakudi Vaidyanathan.

\* \* \*

## KANNADA SONG

ಮುಖಾರಿ

ಝಂಪೆ

ವಾಸುದೇವನ ನಾಮಾವಳಿಯ ಕ್ಷುಪ್ತಿಯನು  
ವ್ಯಾಸರಾಯರ ದಯದಿಂದ ಬಣ್ಣಿಪೆನು

ಪ

ಕೇದಾರ ರಾಮೇಶ್ವರ ಕಂಚಿ ಭೂತಳದ  
ಪಾದಾರವಿಂದ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರ ಪ್ರತಿ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರವು  
ಅದರದಿ ಲಕ್ಷದಿಷ್ಟತ್ವದು ಸಾವಿರ ಕೃತಿಯ  
ವೇದ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರ ಪುರಾಣ ಸಮ್ಮತಿಯಿಂದ

೧

ಮಧ್ವರಾಯರ ಮಹಿಮೆ ಮಹಗುರು ಪರಂಪರೆ  
ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧ ವ್ಯಾಸರಾಯರ ಪರಿಯಂತವು  
ಶುದ್ಧ ತಾರತಮ್ಯಗಳು ತಂತ್ರಸಾರೋಕ್ತದಲಿ  
ಉದ್ಧರಿಸಿದ್ದದು ಸಾವಿರವ ಪೇಳಿದೆನು

೨

ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಲೋಕ ಕೈಲಾಸ ಭರದಿ ದಿಕ್ಪಾಲಕರ  
ಪರ್ಮ ತೊಂಭತ್ತು ಸಾವಿರ  
ಸಮ್ಮತದಿ ಹಲವು ಕಥಾಸಾರ ತೊಂಭತ್ತು ಸಾವಿರ  
ವೊಮ್ಮನದಿ ಪೇಳಿದೆನು ಕೇಳಿ ಜನರು

೩

ಅವರವರ ಮೂರ್ತಿ ಧ್ಯಾನ ಅವರವರ ಕೀರ್ತಿ ಮಾನ  
ವಿವರದಿಂದಲಿ ನಾ ನಿಮಗೆ ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಿದೆನು  
ಘನತೆ ಅಣಿತ ಗಂಡಕಿಯ ಶಿಲಾಮೂರ್ತಿ  
ಅನಘ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಕಥೆ ಅರವತ್ತು ಸಾವಿರ

೪

ಅಹ್ನಿಕ ಗುಣವು ಜನ್ಮಾಷ್ಟಮಿ ಏಕಾದಶಿಯ  
ನಿರ್ಣಯವನು ಶ್ರುತಿ ಸ್ಮೃತಿ ಸಹಿತದಿ  
ವರ್ಣಿಸಿದೆ ಕೀರಾಬ್ಲಿಶಯನ ಅಹೋಬಲ ನರ  
ಸಿಂಹ ಮೂರ್ತಿಗಳ ಶ್ರೀ ನಾಮಗಳನು

೫

ಸುಳಾದಿ ಅರವತ್ತು ಸಾವಿರ ಬಹುತರ ನಾಮಾ  
ವಳಿಯು ಇಪ್ಪತ್ತ್ವದು ಸಾವಿರವಾಗಿದೆ  
ತಿಳಿದು ಶ್ಲೋಕ ದ್ವೀಪ ಅನಂತಾಸನ ವೈಕುಂಠ  
ಸಲೆ ಶೇಷನ ಚರಿತ್ರೆಯನು ಪೇಳಿದೆನು

೬

ಜೀವನ ದರ್ಶನ

ಇಂತು ನಾಲ್ಕು ಲಕ್ಷ ಎಪ್ಪತ್ತ್ವದು ಸಾವಿರ ಕೃತಿಯ  
ಕಂತುಜನಕನ ನಾಮ ಘನ ಮಹಿಮೆಯ  
ಸಂತಸದಿಂದ ಶ್ರುತಿ ಸ್ಮೃತಿ ಸಮ್ಮತದಿಂದ  
ಪುರಂದರವಿಠಲ ವ್ಯಾಸಮುನಿಗಳು ಪೇಳಿಸಿದರು

೭

(ವ್ಯಾಸರಾಯಸ್ವಾಮಿಗಳಿಂದ ಹರಿದಾಸ ದೀಕ್ಷೆಯನ್ನೂ 'ಪುರಂದರವಿಠಲ' ನೆಂಬ ಕಾವ್ಯಾಂಕಿತವನ್ನೂ ಪಡೆದುಕೊಂಡ ಮೇಲೆ  
ಪುರಂದರದಾಸರು ರಚಿಸಿದ ಕೃತಿಗಳ ಮೊತ್ತವನ್ನು ಒಂದು ಲಕ್ಷ ಇಪ್ಪತ್ತ್ವದು ಸಾವಿರವೆಂದು ಹೇಳಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಇದು ಪುರಂದರದಾಸರಿಗೆ  
ಬದಗಿದ ಹರಿದಾಸ ದೀಕ್ಷೆಗೆ ದೃಷ್ಟಾಂತ)

## IX

### CLASSICAL EXTRAVAGANZA

Till the forties of the twentieth century, Classical Carnatic music reigned and ruled and enjoyed undisputed dominance in dramas and films - puranic, historical and social. Chaste Carnatic music flowed copiously from musician-actors and actor-musicians. Some of them have left a legacy which should be the pride of any culture or country. Resonant, captivating voice which traversed two octaves and over was *sine qua non* for acting in the mikeless, music-crazy era. Many of the films had thirty, forty and fifty songs in lilting, titillating pure classical tunes. Significantly dramatic troupes styled themselves 'sabhas'. Cinema was a rich field for propounding alluring classical tunes and good lyrics of eminent composers like Subramania Bharati, Papanasam Sivan and Kannadasan. Madurai G.S. Mani, a Classical Carnatic musician recently held several rounds of concerts with songs from films alone to the delight and admiration of the audience to demonstrate how chaste classicism had held total sway. It was a revelation. Musicians of the stature of Papanasam Sivan, Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar, Musiri Subramania Ayyar, G.N. Balasubramaniam, Dandapani Desikhar, M.S. Subbulakshmi and K.B. Sundarambal enriched film music in a measure that classicism could not perhaps have presented anything better at concerts.

In the field of dramas, the oldest known troupe was the Bharata Bhushana Sangita Sabha. Sangita Kalanidhi Harikesanallur Muthiah Bhagavathar wrote and directed '*Vikrama Stri Sahasam*' with Brahmadesam Krishna Sastrigal and other musicians in lead roles. Bhagavathar could not resist naming the heroine as '*Kanakangi*' after the first Mela. Nawab Govinda Rao was the first modern dramatist. Legendary Sankaradas Swamigal was in the Kalyanaramier Troupe. Balamani Ammal Company (nothing to do with the Indian Companies Act) was a gold rush - a madding crowd's sensible destination. Railway trains running from Tiruchirapalli and Mayiladuthurai to Kumbakonam came to be called 'Balamani Specials'! (As a boy I have heard my mother musing the popular tune '*Pattanathil Vandalodi Balamani*' - Has Balamani come to town?) Madurambika Sangita Nataka Sabha and the much celebrated Cunniah Company (Krishna Vinodha Sabha) dished out finest classics to unprecedented crowds that fanatically thronged the gates daily. I had seen as a boy the Company's 'Bhagawad Gita' at Kumbakonam running to crowded houses in 1932. Cunniah celebrated the staging of the 1008th show of 'Pattabhishekam'! It was a wonderful record then since population was just a third of the present and facilities were few. S.G. Chellappa's composition and entry song '*Dasaratha Raja Kumara*' ( *Hindustan Kapi* ) was a glamorous hit which swayed, thrilled and enthralled thousands. Wizard S.G. Kittappa was a living legend - vide '*A Garland*'. With Harmonist S.G. Kasi Ayyar, they constituted the 'Sengottai Trio'.

Musicians and music lovers idolised Kittappa for his classical idealism, robust innovative conception, matchless *brikas* and above all his all-conquering, divine voice which enchanted and captivated. Doordarshan profits even today on his few songs which are still extant for the benefit and solace of the listener. The magnificence of the musical excellence could be gauged from the fact that the last of his dramas for Cunnieah Company in 1923 was witnessed by a galaxy of musicians like Vocal maestro Konerirajapuram Vaidyanatha Ayyar, Nagaswara wizard T.N. Rajarathinam, Harikatha celebrity C. Saraswati Bai, Flute Tiruppamburam Swaminatha Pillai, Violin stalwart Malaikottai Govindaswami Pillai, etc. It had all the grace of a *sadas* of the Music Academy ! Musicians flocked; public went delirious.

There was a host of others like C.V.V. Pantulu, Manamohana Arangaswami Naidu, S.V. Subbiah Bhagavatar, K.S. Devudu Ayyar (harmonist), Khader Batcha (harmonist) and Maharajapuram Krishnamurti. The precious jewel who set standards in lakshya music, K.B. Sundarambal was there. Hers was music that was traditional, orthodox in content, coverage and delivery. **If only musicians like S.G. Kittappa and K.B. Sundarambal possessed with such transcendental voice and style exist today, it would sound the death-knell to promiscuous neo-classicism and rudderless light music.** No doubt about it. The language would seem to have attained enhanced prestige by the winsome clarity of pronunciation she commanded! She started with Shanmuganandha Sabha of P.S. Velu Nair, in one of whose dramas I had acted as a eleven-year old maid at the Waltax Theatre, Madras in 1935–36. Nott Annaji Rao (purvashrama father of Swami Haridhos Giri) and P.S. Velammal were in it in lead roles. Madurai Original Boys, Nawab Rajamanickam troupe and T.K. Shanmugam Brothers were all legendary.

And it should be noted that dramas were not confined to urban centres as now. Every village and every festival had dramas and there was a rich fare of classical music. That was the reason why classicism prospered then. It was an instrument of education and propagation of dharma, morals and nationalism too! Patriot Bhagat Singh was hanged by the British for the only treason of being a patriot ! Those were pre-independence days. 'Let the sound of those he wrought for and the feet of those he fought for, echo round his bones for evermore !' Gandhi Bhagavatar (Kumbakonam Rajarama Bhagavatar) composed that day the super-hit song that stirred up dormant patriotism in the far-flung areas –

*'Çirai Vayil Thanil Azhudal ! Bharatamata !!'*  
(Mother India wept at the gates of the prison.)

— Raga: *Mand*

The same evening, the sterling silver-toned K.B. Sundarambal gave melodious life to it and sang the piece on the stage with such pathos and thrilling feeling that she had to be honoured with arrest by the British. (People now

canvass for formal arrest warrants for record. It was then an entry to hell.) The song came to be sung by rustics in nooks and corners of Tamil Nadu. Golden-voiced K.S. Chellappa Ayyar famous for the entry - song '*Jaya Jaya Gokulabala (Bhairavi)*' with honeyed brikas and swaras and the talented male in lady's role, K.S. Anantanarayana Ayyar were dramatist-duos. Similar was the situation in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, where too dramas were very popular. It is surprising to note that Bidaram Krishnappa, Veena Shamanna, Subbanna, Honnappa Bhagavatar, Veeraraghava Ayyangar and several top musicians were all dramatists! And Classical Carnatic music was the raging medium for the musical extravaganza. And the elite and the rustic enjoyed it fully.

The entire edifice got shattered. The divine wedding or coparcenary between drama/film and classical music began to fade out in the fifties and is now part of history. The principal culprit was the mike which demolished voice-culture and the abettor was a famine of stage-musicians of the calibre of Kittappa and Sundarambal. Aggressive vendors of commercialised light music made it appear that light music alone stood for stage and films and for entertainment. Classical Music is the casualty in consequence.

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### STRANGE BED FELLOWS!

'The most successful and prominent musicological output getting concentrated on the interpretation of the Sanskrit Sastras has prevented the youthful discipline of twentieth century, Indian Musicology, from attaining a holistic character...Systematisation of living traditions has remained unfulfilled... musicians and musicologists remain strange bedfellows, with -

musicians scoffing at musicologists as irrelevant scholars and

musicologists looking down at musicians as ill-informed, perspectionless, visionless, uneducated lot.'

— Anant Vaidyanathan.

There is a visible decline in the number of musicologists of eminence. Voco-musicologists like Mudicondan Venkatarama Ayyar and S.R. Janakiraman and scholarly musicologists like Dr. V. Raghavan and T.S. Parthasarathy are not many among rising generations.

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### BASIC CHANGE

Music was a full-time vocation till a few years back with few exceptions. Now many of the young musicians are in full-time jobs and are part-time musicians. Music may be a stepping stone for promotion, social and economic affluence and corporate patronage. Do they block the scarce opportunities available for full-timers and thus render their vocation insecure?

\* \* \*

## X

## A

## Climactic Dazzle

Sage or layman, man, woman or child, everyone stands awed by and thrilled at the sight of mountains and never feels a surfeit of gazing at them. Gods take their abodes at the heights of mountains - Parameshwar on snow-clad Kailas, Venkateshwara at Tirupati and Kartikeya at Palani and people flock to them in preference to temples on plains. Raja Raja Chola wanted the Linga at Sri Brhadiswara temple, Tanjore to be very tall when he constructed the historic temple. Waterfalls are an eternal delight; greater the height, immense and complete is the delight. The Lord assumes Vishwarupa to instil and convey the truth of His Omnipotence. Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay of Mount Everest conquest ( *ati tara sthayi* ) are familiar names even to school children but not Jacques Coustau or C.S. Thompson who delved deep into the depths of oceans ( *anu mandara sthayi* ). Vedic chants reach the crescendo to bring devotion to pointed attention and provide a sense of fulfilment.

'*Tarakanama Tyagarajanutha*' in *Ksheerasagara (Devagandhari)*, *Jagadod-dharana* and such other *tara sthayi* rendition exult and captivate the listener much more than *madhya sthayi*. As the musician develops the alapana step by step on the arohana, the audience sits up and eagerly waits to see whether and how he scales the peak and gets ready to applaud. Once the peak is reached, exhilaration envelops the listener and a sense of attainment descends on the musician. There is alround pleasure. B.S. Rajah Ayyangar, S.G. Kittappa, K.B. Sundarambal, T.R. Mahalingam and such other singers (Homa birds as described by Ramakrishna Paramahansa) were hot favourites of thousands of listeners for decades and their songs still bring back nostalgic memories.

### What is the magic or lure of the *tara sthayi* ?

Padma Bhushan Prof. T.N. Krishnan opines:

'It is not only because of *tara sthayi*; but also because of the high sruti in which the musicians mentioned used to sing. This enabled the maestros to communicate and to have a permanent impact over their audiences with their deep music. Vocal or instrumental, sruti or pitch must be high while practising or performing.' Brigadier B. Ramamurthi has a different explanation to this phenomenon, the climactic dazzle or experience of bliss or *ananda* and it follows.



## B

**Man's admiration for the Supreme**

(By Prof. (Dr). B. Ramamurthi, M.S., F.R.C.S.(E), F.I.C.S.(HON),  
F.A.C.S., F.A.M.S., F.A.Sc., F.N.A., Neurosurgeon & President,  
National Board of Examinations., New Delhi.)

What is this feeling of joy and grandeur that arises in us when listening to certain pieces of music, a feeling of getting elevated beyond ourselves for a few moments when enthralled by the magical notes? "*Lokan unmadayan, shrutheer mukulayan - vijayatey vamsee ninadah sisoh*". "Is there an explanation or is it a moment of bliss, where our mundane self momentarily embraces Cosmic Joy?"

During evolution many basic qualities have been ingrained in the humans like feeding, reproduction, sex and the necessary emotions and these were superimposed with memory, intelligence and self awareness which differentiate us from the animals. Apart from these there are certain qualities that are apparent in us but for which there is no adequate explanation in the evolutionary process, e.g. self sacrifice, altruism, etc. Among these is the quality of admiration for something that is better than the ordinary, a peculiar combination of the feelings of joy, awe and grandeur that is aroused in the very depths of our being by certain experiences, thoughts and visions.

The sense of grandeur evoked when looking at great mountains, the awe inspired by the gathering clouds of a storm, the beauty evoked in witnessing a glorious sunset and a feeling of enormity and magnificence when contemplating the vastness of the sky and the innumerable universes that lie beyond our vision - these are a few examples. The attempt at visualising the *Paramatma* as described in the *Upanishads* leaves us with a sense of wonder and inadequacy. "*Yatho vacho nivartanthey aprapya manasa saha*." These inherent and inbuilt feelings of joy and grandeur are kindled, when listening to certain types of music, in all humans, from the aborigines to the civilised, in the occident and in the orient, in the illiterate and in the highly educated and in sinners and in saints.

This is the feeling aroused in us when we hear our expert musicians render certain pieces of wonderful music. **This feeling does not depend on one's knowledge of music, but arises in the depths of our being by the very act of listening to the magnificent notes.** It can only be surmised that this feeling arises somewhere deep within our soul, perhaps as a fleeting reminder of our great heritage, of our intimate connection with the Supreme Being, who is inherent in all our souls. For a few moments we feel within ourselves the Bliss that is shining within us, the effulgence of the Supreme Spirit activating our existence. Covered by ignorance and by ever disturbing thoughts and emotions, this supreme joy which is our birthright is denied to us ordinarily, but during certain moments of our life, as when listening to the magical notes of inspired

music, our inner being rises above all its bondages and manifests to ourselves for a moment in the feeling of supreme joy, *ANANDA*. No wonder our ancients taught us that one of the easier ways to achieve Bliss or *Ananda* is through *Nadopasana*. If listeners could be so elevated, we can imagine the joy that the musician must be experiencing when rendering these blissful notes.

### ROAST THE PERCUSSIONIST ?

Venue : Kanchipuram Naina Pillai's house.  
Occasion : Lunch to musicians and friends.

Konnakol Mannargudi Pakkiri Pillai, Pudukottai Dakshinamurti Pillai and Dolak Kumbakonam Venu Chettiar sat by the side of Naina Pillai, who asked his wife to 'pour' (not merely serve) ghee to Chettiar. Innocent Chettiar was puzzled and looked at the Pudukkottai percussion maestro, who clarified :

'Don't you understand ? The lion asks its equipollent.  
More ghee to us now is only to roast us this evening ! '

(Source: B.M. Sundaram)

Naina Pillai was known for his terrifying pallavi and laya-oriented aggressive music. Naturally the percussionists were ever alert and ill at ease at his concerts for fear of being 'roasted' to the gaze of the audience. Accompanists dreaded to share the stage.

\* \* \*

### ROAST THE AUDIENCE

Laya connotes tension. Many could not swallow or tolerate it. Veteran parliamentarian S. Satyamurti and pioneer bharatanatya specialist E. Krishnayyar were among its critics. Both were freedom fighters and were with the Music Academy, Madras in fact. Naina Pillai cared little for views against his laya and pallavi. 'On the other hand, he increased inversely proportional pallavis *a fortiori*.' If anyone caused disturbance or asked for any particular piece, he would admonish them significantly by singing –

*Mariyadagadayya*

*Budhi raadu*

*Seetavara Sangeeta Gnaanamu*  
*daata vraayavalena*

(It is not an act of respectability),

(True wisdom will not dawn...),

(One must be blessed with  
knowledge of music).

When someone asked for a piece of Arunachala Kavirayar, Kanchi Dhanakoti Ammal obliged him by singing the piece –

'*Yaarada Kurange*' (Who are you, Oh! Monkey ?) '

(Source: B.M. Sundaram)

A memorable public recognition and honour to the rasika indeed !

\* \* \*

# XI

## CRADLES OF MUSIC-II

### PUDUKOTTAI :

'A *Garland* ' contains an account of the contribution made by Pudukottai to music and the large number of musicians who adorned the Court.

There is a tradition that Tyagaraja visited the State and at the instance of his guru Sonti Venkataramanayya sang *Jyoti Swarupini* raga causing a wick kept for the purpose to burn and that Syama Sastri had also visited the State. (Manual of Pudukottai State, 1940 Volume II.) How far this tradition is true to fact is not known but it may be noted that Pudukottai is just sixty kilometres from Tanjore. *Vide* map. The District Gazetteer (1983) adds:

'Pudukottai has for several centuries been a seat of music and dance. A number of rulers of the Tondaiman Dynasty were connoisseurs of fine arts. Vijaya Raghunatha Raya Tondaiman was himself an accomplished musician and composer. Pudukottai had the unique privilege of being blessed with the benign presence of Sri Sadasiva Brahmendral. In *Sangita Sampradaya Pradarsini* (1904), we find the names of a number of musicians honoured by the Pudukottai Court.. The musical tradition can be traced to the seventh century A.D. when the famous inscriptions at Kudumiamalai were incised...'

Tirumayam too had inscriptions of value. One of the rulers, Ramachandra Tondaiman was a prolific composer and his kuravanji was enacted at Viralimalai. The sculpture of Vinadhara Dakshinamurti at Tirumayam shows the Lord holding the vina obliquely and playing with his right hand and plucking the strings with the left. The bowl is on the left and the yali is on the right side. It is mentioned that Tiruvenkadaiyar took cue probably from this, played so and came to be called '*Savya Sachi*' (Arjuna). The eminent bhagavatha Gopala Krishna Bhagavata, Tirugokarnam Kanakambhujam (harikatha) and T.S. Ranganayaki (mridangist) hailed from Pudukottai. *Pahimam Brihannayike*, the swarajati, is attributed to Swati Tirunal though Dr. V. Raghavan doubts the authenticity of this version. *Viralimalai Kuravanji* (c.1750 A.D.) was being staged annually. Karaikudi Veena Brothers were from Pudukottai.

### GOLKONDA:

The word '*Konda* ' means in telugu 'a hill' but in tamil 'bring'. Actually the place brought in good compositions from two great savants. Bhadrachala Ramadasa made the devotional outpourings of an incarcerated soul while he underwent incarceration at Golkonda. Kshetragna was with the ruler of Tanjore. The ruler of Golkonda invaded Tanjore with success and Kshetragna strangely

walked into the camp of the invader - voluntarily or in captivity - and was taken to Golkonda. One thousand pieces were composed by him there though only a small number is available now.

## MELATTUR

Known for its rich fertility, vast carpet of paddy fields intersected by small and big channels and groves and situated in the bosom of the Cauvery Delta, Melattur is one of the chosen centres of the Goddess of Art with several satellite villages around it. If Kuchipudi caught the imagination of Andhra, Melattur has carved out its place in Tamil Nadu with its Bhagavata Mela. Tsoukam Veerabhadrayya, guru to Ramaswami Dikshitar and Venkatarama Sastri, who authored *Prahalada Charitram* and other dance-dramas in telugu hailed from Melattur. Once a year, the Mela (festival) is held and dance-dramas are enacted by hereditary artistes with music and abhinaya. They are 'neither of the folk type nor the modern, glamorised ordinary dramas. Nor can it be said to have been evolved from folk plays. It is a revival of the ancient Natya tradition', says the master-architect of the resurgence of bharata natya, E. Krishna Ayyar. Bhagavata Mela at Melattur is one of the recognised art-festivals of India. (*Vide map.*)

## TIRUPPAMBURAM:

A sacred place near the author's village (*Vide map*), Tiruppamburam has been a nursery of nagaswara artistes, an eminent flautist and dramatists. Adisesha, the deity after whom the village must have derived its name, 'is worshipped here and has been praised by eminent tamil saints. There was one Ayyan Pillai followed by his successors Sesha Pillai (odhuvar and sarindha), Kulandaivel Pillai (odhuvar and vainika), Swaminatha Pillai, a disciple of Koorainadu Nagaswaram Ramaswami and the famous Tiruppamburam Brothers Natarajasundaram and Sivasubramaniam (nagaswaram). The elder published the kritis of Muthuswami Dikshitar as '*Dikshitar Kirtanai Prakasikai*', following Subburama Dikshitar (1904) as a tribute to the great composer. His son was the famous flautist and composer Sangita Kalanidhi T.N. Swaminatha Pillai. The latter's sons taught nagaswaram at the Annamalai University and Swamimalai and Palani Music Schools. His son Dr. Shanmugasundaram, a fine musician is currently Principal, Tamil Nadu Music Training Centre, Madras. Pakkiriswami of the village was a dramatist whose team would pour out melodious songs effortlessly. The beauty is that his artistes would play the role of Krishna and Radha at night and the next morning would be seen doing some agricultural work - the change being as smooth as the transition of the night into day. That is a tribute to their artistic sagacity, acumen and versatility. It is claimed that Avvan Pillai was the son of Amirdakavi Kunniyah Pillai a disciple

of the celebrated Muthu Thandavar. Thandavar's Sirkali is just sixty kilometres from Thiruppamburam.

### VIZIANAGARAM:

Karvetinagar, Venkatagiri, Nuzvid, Challapalli, Vizianagaram and Bobbili have been great centres of promotion and sustenance of music, art and patronage. Maharaja Ananda Gajapatigaru is stated to have enabled Tachur Singaracharyulu to travel extensively and acquire material for bringing out and popularising six graded books on music. Veena with Venkataramana Das Pantulu and harikatha (musical discourse) with Adibhatla Narayana Das brought fame and glory to the place. Das was the first Principal of Maharajah's College of Music, Vizianagaram and was succeeded by Dwaram Venkataswami Naidu in 1936. Prof.P. Sambamurti states that Vizianagaram carved for itself an honoured place on the musical map of India largely due to the patronage of Maharaja Ananda Gajapati and the advent of illustrious musicians like –

Gururayacharyulu, Duruvasulu Suryanarayana Sastrulu, Venkataramana Das, Adibhatla Narayana Das and Kala Prapurna Dwaram Venkataswamy Naidu.

\* \* \* \* \*

### CAVEAT COMPOSERS :

Compositions starting with the letter 'NÁ' destroys wealth :  
with the letter 'HA' destroys fame ; and  
with the letter 'MA' destroys everything.

This warning in *Sangita Darpan* may be assessed in the context of songs like –

*Nadachi Nadachi (Kharaharapriya)*

*Hari Yanuvani (Todi)* and

*Makelara Vicharamu (Ravichandrika)*. Let it 'destroy everything', what do I care ?

\* \* \*

### TRANSITIONAL PHASE :

Classical Carnatic music is in the process of transition from uncompromising tradition-based classicism to an undefined compromising classicism with a multitude of software professional vendors catering to professional and amateur purchasers and audience in the hands of a plethora of urban-oriented commercial and non-commercial vested interests whose interest in the promotion of classicism may be perhaps marginal.

— M.N.R.

\* \* \*

## XII

### SOUL OF EMINENCE IS IMMORTAL

#### The Inimitable Bharatis

' Of thousands of men some rare soul strives to realize Me:  
Of those striving Yogis, again, some rare one knows Me in reality. '

(VII-3 *Bhagavad Gita*)

1881 was the year of discarding his earthly frame. 1882 was the year of his birth. No fears; there is no mistake in the years! The Bharati of Narimanam left and the Bharati of Ettayapuram arrived. Subramania Bharati drew profound inspiration from the songs of Gopala Krishna Bharati. Cultural, emotional and artistic instincts and ideals of both were in essence identical and their revolutionary endeavours ran on even keel. While spiritual uplift and crusade against untouchability predominate in the songs of Gopala Krishna, social uplift and crusade for political independence are the dominant features of Subramania. If Nandanar was the chosen instrument for the projection of his ideals for one, Tilak, Lajpat Rai, Panchali, etc., were the instruments of the other. Both were strangers to material affluence. Both were supreme masters in tamil and music. Even if Tamil Nadu sidelines them and their contributions, history shall assign them golden pages.

Dr. M.V. Jayarama Ayyar of Venkatesha Education Society, Bangalore has drawn some beautiful parallel identities in the songs of the two Bharatis which substantiate how Subramania had extensively taken the lead given by and drawn inspiration from his elder (Anandathandavapuram Gopala Krishna Bharati Souvenir). Here are they:

#### Of Gopala Krishna Bharati

*Eppo tolaiyuminda thunbam*

*Madu tinnum pulaya*

*Unakku Margazhi thirunalo?*

*Gnayamtano neer sollum:*

*Oy Nandanare, Namma jadhikkadukkumo ?*

*Namenna seyvom pulayare; Indha  
bhoomiyilillada pudumaiyai kandom*

*Andaikkadimai nanallave*

*Tillaiveliyile kalandu  
kondalavar tirumbiyum ...*

#### Of Subramania Bharati

*Endru thaniyuminda sudandira dagam...*

*Thondu seyyumadimai;*

*Unakku sudandira ninaivoda?*

*Oy, Tilakare nam jadhikkadukkumo?*

*Seyvadu sariyo sollum.*

*Namenna seyvom thunaivare; Indha  
bhoomiyilillada pudumaiyai kandom*

*Anniyartamakkadimai allave*

*Vira sudandiram vendi nindrar  
pinnar, verondru...'*

These clearly establish the fact that the ingenuous flame disappeared on the day of Maha Sivaratri in 1881 only to reappear in 1882 not only to prove that soul is immortal but also to declare unequivocally that the elder was the legator, trail-blazer and the younger the legatee.

## XIII

**"LET US SKIP TIRUVAIYARU"**

(A Farce)

'Janaki, could you recollect having seen this magnificent landscape ?'

'No, dear Lord, it was long back and I was then in captivity and in deep distress. How could I ever think of the landscape then? You have thoughtfully brought me here now. I am glad that your visit to this cultured Chola Desa had blessed the people with rivers running to their brim after a long time.... Much has changed too since my last journey to the South with scores of enchanting temples of immense size, rare architectural beauty and sculptural elegance springing up like chess pieces on a vast carpet of green paddy fields intersected by serpentine rivers and roads like improvised, innovative delineation of ragas and swaras. Noble edifices, ancient culture, appearance of a galaxy of sages, saints, rulers and artistes of eminence, what a beautiful land of aggregated charm and splendour is this!! No wonder music and dance found their genial home here.'

(Sita and Rama pass through Chidambaram, Mayiladuthurai, Aduthurai, Kumbakonam and Tiruvidaimarudur, Mannargudi and reach Tanjore. There is hesitation. Pushpak viman slows down and hovers over Tanjore.)

'You seem to be turning back? Is not Panchanada Kshetram (Tiruvaiyaru) in our itinerary? You look agitated too!'

[ Sita draws near.]

'I would like to skip Tiruvaiyaru, Sita. Once we step into Tiruvaiyaru, Tyagaraja would block our movement and I am scared of him too!!'

'Tyagaraja! How does he come into the picture? It was you who granted him salvation a century and a half back.'

'Oh! I understand. The mother in you clouds your vision and renders you blind to realities. Can't you recollect his harassing me with never-ending pleas, pathetic and pressing entreaties, nagging questions, petty insinuations and intolerant jealousies! His passion for his kshetra and this river Cauvery and his surrender to *Nadopasana* would surely drive him mad once he knows that we were to be at Tiruvaiyaru. He will relinquish his place in Heaven or take a holiday from Salvation itself and wait at the bridge on the outskirts of Tiruvaiyaru.... You may like to see him again. But I shudder even to think of Tyagaraja. Please try to forget the place. We have many places to see yet.... If you like, we could visit Tiruvarur.'

'How could you say so of that prime devotee of yours. Very unfair, dear. We should be glad if he steals sometime from Heaven to be with us....'

'Maithili, you have no idea of the nagging harassment I had suffered, his cutting sarcasm, his biting insinuations and his colossal capacity and obsession with his own urge. Even if Tyagaraja is not there, **Tyagaraja-ism** is sufficient to unnerve me.'

(Wipes the surging sweat with Sita's scented handkerchief apparently in a tactical manoeuvre to rope her in to his view.)

'See, Sita; You know that I had given him darshans and often talked to him. Why, he has himself acknowledged them in many songs like –

- |                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| <i>Bhavanuta</i>              | - <i>Mohanam</i> , wherein he refers to my visit to his house;                                    |
| <i>Pahi Rama Rama Yanuchu</i> | - <i>Kharaharapriya</i> , in which he avers that I gave him darshan and spoke to him endearingly. |
| <i>Kanugontini</i>            | - <i>Bilahari</i> , in which he records having found me: and                                      |
| <i>Giripai Nelakonna</i>      | - <i>Sahana</i> , wherein he categorically notes that he had been promised of Salvation by me.    |

Do not be under the impression that it was all casual 'seeing' and the like. He concedes in *Enta Bhagyamu - Saranga* of my being close to him, speaking to him with affection and dispelling all his sorrows. *Paluku Kandachakkeranu - Navarasa Kannada* is the relevant record of my discussing with him the merits of the dance and music of - not Tanjore courtezans but of - celestial women and dancing girls and that our discussions were fruitful and sweet. He concedes, in his *Rama Rama Ramachandra - Ghanta, Chinna nade Na ( Kalanidhi )* and *Emani Vegintune - Huseni*, that he had nothing to aspire for and that I had taken him by the hand, embraced him and cheered him up. With the population galloping towards 5000 millions and attendant work, I forget when I had taken your hand, Sita. But I am sure I had taken his out of sheer love of him and sympathy for his saintliness, musicianship and supreme vaggeyakara eminence. But when I seek to look to others, lo! what happens? He raises a hue and cry like a naughty orphan, a nagging second wife, a domineering nayika (*virahotkanthita, vipralabda, proshitabhartrika* or a *viyoga*), or a hungry ailing person. He accuses me of deserting him though he is fully aware of his special relationship with me.

He cries, weeps, objects, challenges, accuses and teases. I am harassed, Sita. Pity me, dear. My father would not have suffered so at the hands of my step-mother from Kekaya. ..You smile when I feel embittered. He keeps incessant pressure on me nibbling away my time and energy as in –



*Enta Papinaiti* - *Gowlipantu*: Says, he cannot bear separation from me!

*Chentane Sada* - *Kuntalavarali*: Insists on being with me always.

### **Do you see the threat to your own companionship?**

*Lali Lalayya* - *Kedaragowla*: Warns me that he would not part with me.

### **Is it Satyagraha or Duragraha, Sita?**

*Ni Vadane Gana* - *Saranga*: 'I can't bear your separation even for a minute', says he.

### **Am I to desist from all my duties? What happens to my confidential work if we were to co-exist like a kangaroo and its cub?**

You smile; only he who wears the shoe feels the pinch. My parents and brothers would never give me a whisper of any difficulty. Of course, you were harsh when I started for the forest at the bidding of my step-mother. That was probably what it should have been to fulfil my avatar mission. But Tyagaraja teases me saying that I am not compassionate (*Ramabhirama Ramaniya Nama* - *Darbar*). He goes further and demands that I should swear to him, Sita (*Andundakane* - *Pantuvarali*)! Wants me to be talking to him alone endlessly as if I begot him late in my life after much penance and pilgrimage (*Palukavemi Na Daivama* - *Purnachandrika*). Kings and princes wait on me and talk to me with respect. But see how Tyagaraja stoops to taunt and tease me taking advantage of my solicitude:

'Not an act of respectability' - *Mariyada Gadayya* - *Bhairavam*

'Have you no self-respect' - *Manamu Leda?* - *Hamir Kalyani*

'You have no love for the poor' - *Nidasanudasu* - *Hamir Kalyani*

He accuses me of blatant duplicity in *Chala Kallaladu* ( *Arabhi* ) and *Atta Balukudu* ( *Atana* ). Please note that he raises his voice in *Atana*. He does not allow me to rest. He blows hot and cold. Actually I see deliberate, planned duplicity in his conduct; otherwise how could that charge arise in his song?'

'Dear, the architecture of this Brhadeeswara temple is unique ...'

'Sita, stop that. I have seen it a dozen times. I feel that you want me to ignore the pinpricks and look beyond at the alleged innate goodness of the bard. Well, that is what I too wanted. But see, he might go to the civil court alleging that I was not fair to him and that he had suffered in consequence (*Rama Ninu Namminanu* - *Mohanam*). It is not an isolated insinuation. He is creating a case for action for tort in *Chelimini Jalajakshu* - *Yadukula Kambhoji* that owing to my

absence, his health has gone down and he has become weak in body and that he is suffering from agony and fatigue in *Bhavanuta - Mohanam*. To build up evidence; he records that I had hidden myself (*Endudaginado - Todi*), as if I was jumping bail seeking to escape from the clutches of law. This is sheer impertinence. It suffocates and oppresses me, Sita.'

'Dear, Tyagaraja only expresses his anguish and gives free vent to his robust but oppressive love of you and as a poet it could be that he takes liberties to exaggerate. So...'

'You know him not. You are carried away by his platitudinous, sugar-coated songs. Let me be frank with you now. (In muffled tone.) He is even jealous of you, Sita. He pries into our privacy. Unwittingly he has recorded in *Lali Yugave - Nilambari* that he was adoring me when you were giving me betel and nut for chewing! Does he stop there? He takes liberties with this son of Dasaratha, this King of Ayodhya and directs, 'Come hand in hand with Janaki' (*Sri Rama Rama - Gopikavasantam*). **He would have invited us to a waltz had he not been elevated to the Heaven!**

[Sita seeks to say something. But her Lord allows her not.]

"Patience Sita. I have not finished. Tyagaraja actually wants to be a second Sita to lullaby me to sleep -

*Lali Laliyani* - *Harikambhoji* and

*Uyyala* - *Nilambari*

He directs me to 'Drink this milk' as if there is no milk at Ayodhya or in Vaikuntha (*Aragimpave - Todi*)! He lacks capability to check himself and stop. He wants to supplant you, Sita! He wants to wean me from you by sedulously suggesting -

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| — to 'accept rose—water bath'                   | — <i>Koluvamare Gada - Todi</i> ,         |
| — to 'accept the comfortable bed'               | — <i>Ramabhirama - Darbar</i> ,           |
| — to 'take my bed on this couch'                | — <i>Sri Rama Rama - Gopikavasantam</i> ; |
| — to 'accept this pansupari'                    | — <i>Vidamu Seyave - Kharaharapriya</i> ; |
| — that he 'would decorate me himself'           | — <i>Chetulara - Kharaharapriya</i> ;     |
| — that he 'would dress and decorate me himself' | — <i>Rara Sita - Hindola Vasantam</i> ."  |

'It is all the outburst of love of filtered purity, my Lord.'

'Well, see how he filters! Your enigmatic smile intrigues me! Why not wait for the climax? Tyagaraja betrays himself in his *Rara Sita* that he would not only dress me but would invite me to... Shameful. I am ashamed to mention that.'

'If he invites you to dine or for something else, why not go and give him the pleasure?'

'Keep quiet. It's not anything of that sort. He solicits me 'Give me a kiss; I shall hug you to my bosom'. **This is wretched nonsense.**'

'Allow him to do so once. He would go away. What is there for you to lose, my Lord?.'

'So you suggest that I should have my '*oka patni*' qualification rewritten and have another as Tyaga-Sita by my side.'

'Dear, you took to task Jabali Rishi when he spoke in his love of you and his desire to keep you at Ayodhya. Now when Tyagaraja says some simple things, you get annoyed.'

'You are not fair to me, Sita. I may run mad.... Yes, mad.'

'No dear, if he wants a kiss, why not give it. None will mistake your action. As a child, you played your first and last mischief with that Manthara and you reaped the consequences. But misbehaviour is not in your element. Tyagaraja has himself given you a Certificate of Good Behaviour with the women of Ayodhya when they were charmed with your radiant face and approached you. (*Natha Brovave-Bhairavi*). Please spend sometime at Tiruvaiyaru. The world is now marching towards 5000 million souls as you said. I too would like to do some social work to wipe the tears of the poor!

'Now I get at the secret of your support. Vote-catching? Social work? Turned political? Or you are captivated and lured by his deceptive saintly approach, enchanting music and multi-dimensional praise of you! Well, you may not care; but what of others. Tyagaraja is jealous of everyone else:

- of innocent Sabari (*Entani Ne - Mukhari*),
- of devoted Garuda (*Vinatasuta - Huseni*) and
- of my matchless brother, Lakshman (*Mitri Bhagyame - Kharaharapriya*).

Am I to discard them all and be by the side of your ward, allow him to dress and decorate me, take milk and pan supari from his hands and give him a kiss as and when he desires? Are you mad, Sita? *Nan Oru Vilayattu Bommaya* (Am I a mere plaything) as Papansam Sivan has sung?

[ His face reflects deep distress and frustration.]

By allowing him to do all this, do you think I could hope to silence him. He will pester me with questions galore. What an array of never-ending questions he releases? He has the make-up to be the best prosecuting advocate in a country criminal court that was ever produced. Just think of a few songs like -

*Rama Ninu Namminanu - Mohanam and Inta tamasamite - Saveri.*

This Yuga will not be sufficient to answer his queries. Well, no use of trying to satisfy you when you refuse to appreciate my distress. I shall stay at Tanjore, see Tiruvaiyaru and return. *Tyagaraja-ism* will confront you there; and you are sure to return as Parvati did after trying to attend the *yaga* of Daksha, her father.'

'Once, I parted with you and I learnt a bitter lesson. Either we go together or we drop Tiruvaiyaru. When you talk so well of his capacity for questioning, why not atleast confer a title on him now that every young artiste carries a cartload of titles and the poor bard has none.'

'Sita, I really wonder at your capacity to bear insults. He audaciously questions you, 'Do you sing with love; do you prostrate with your body before Rama' (*Pakkala Nilabadi - Kharaharapriya*). You don't take it amiss! I shall refer the issue of conferring a title posthumously on him to a Committee to examine, as is the practice now, and suggest. Now I could give him a post-graduate degree - "M.I." - Master of Interrogation!'

'Sita, I would like not only to drop Tiruvaiyaru trip but feel like distancing myself from *Kharaharapriya* raga itself. Tyagaraja invokes it too much for his insinuating indulgences! And he succeeds!!'

\* \* \*

(Tired of arguing and anxious not to miss the chance of enjoying the splendiferous natural beauty, both relapse into silence for a while. The Pushpak viman strays a little beyond Tanjore towards Tiruvaiyaru.)

'Sita', asks a startled Rama, 'did you sing?'

'No, you did not ask me to.... You were thoughtful...'

'I hear that song *Etavuna Nerchitivo (Yadukula Kombhoji)* meaning –

"Why are you going about enacting the drama?  
Have your devotees been inviting you  
to stage this drama of yours?"

That is the golden voice of Tyagaraja and it is his song. He beckons us. Hurry up; he will take me to task if we tarry further. If Tyagaraja is not there, *Tyagaraja-ism* will do so.... See the beauty of the place. His description in

*Muripemu Galige Gada - Mukhari* as a charming and excellent place in all the world is no exaggeration! Tyagaraja envisages Lakshman to be with us too. Let us summon him too... Oh, Lakshman is here!

'You accused Tyagaraja a little while ago and bestowed on him the unsolicited degree 'M.I.' Now, you will appreciate that it is a poor recompense for his conferring on you the degree 'M.D.' (Master of Dramaturgy). If you had not terminated your play, *Tyagaraja-ism* would have surely conferred a doctorate on you.'

**(The groves, temples and the river Cauvery  
reverberate with their laughter and ours too.)**

\* \* \* \* \*

### THE DANGER ?

'Where are you starting, grandpa ?'

'For Classical Carnatic music concert at...'

'You are doing disservice to the ancient art, grandpa.'

'How ?'

'With your attendance, the average age of the audience will come down, grandpa !' \*

Note : There are committees galore for everything. Will it be too much to set up one more High Level Committee to go into the issue of attracting youth and people from all strata of the community ?

\* ( Grandpa would be the youngest in the audience ! )

\* \* \*

### SARTORIAL THREAT !

'Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar gave his concert in 1966 with dhoti, jibba and angavastram (upper cloth); with dhoti and jibba alone in 1967; with dhoti and upper cloth alone in 1968 and in 1969 with the dhoti alone. I feel nervous and apprehensive of attending his concert in 1970 !'

— Subbudu.

(Bhagavatar was a Sangita Kalanidhi who was at home not only in music with his inimitable tone but also with changes in his sartorial selections. Of course, he was no *avadhuta*.)

\* \* \*

'Notation is to improvisation as the portrait to the living model.'

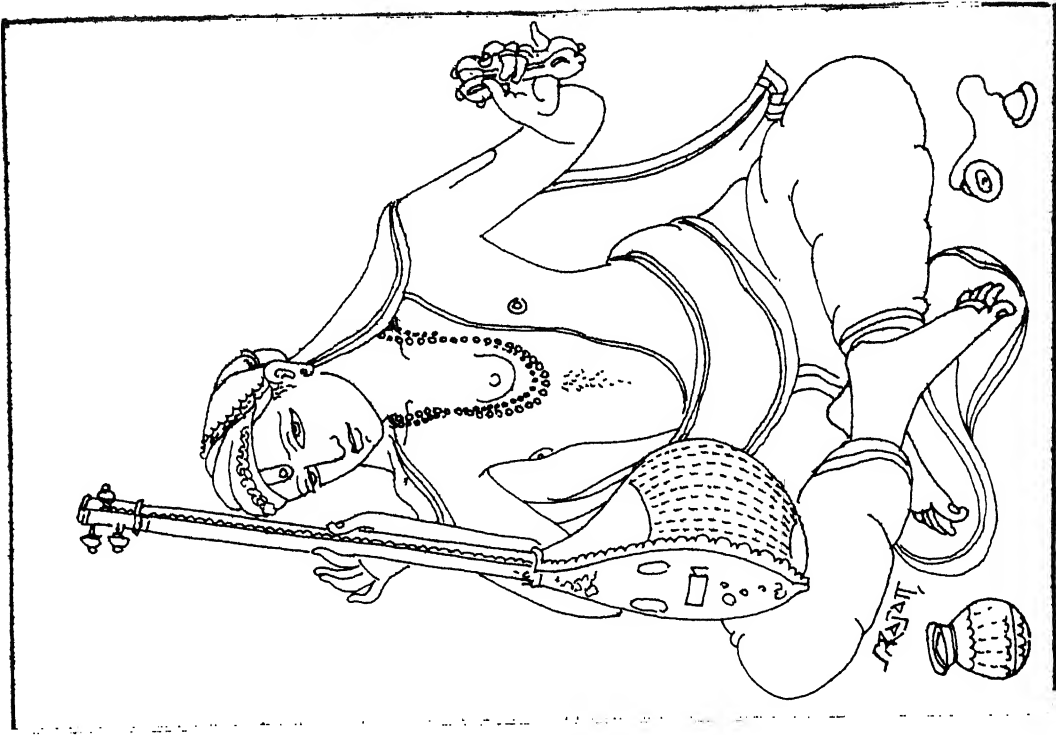
— Ferruccio Busoni.

## PART II

### KALIDASA'S MUSICAL SENSE

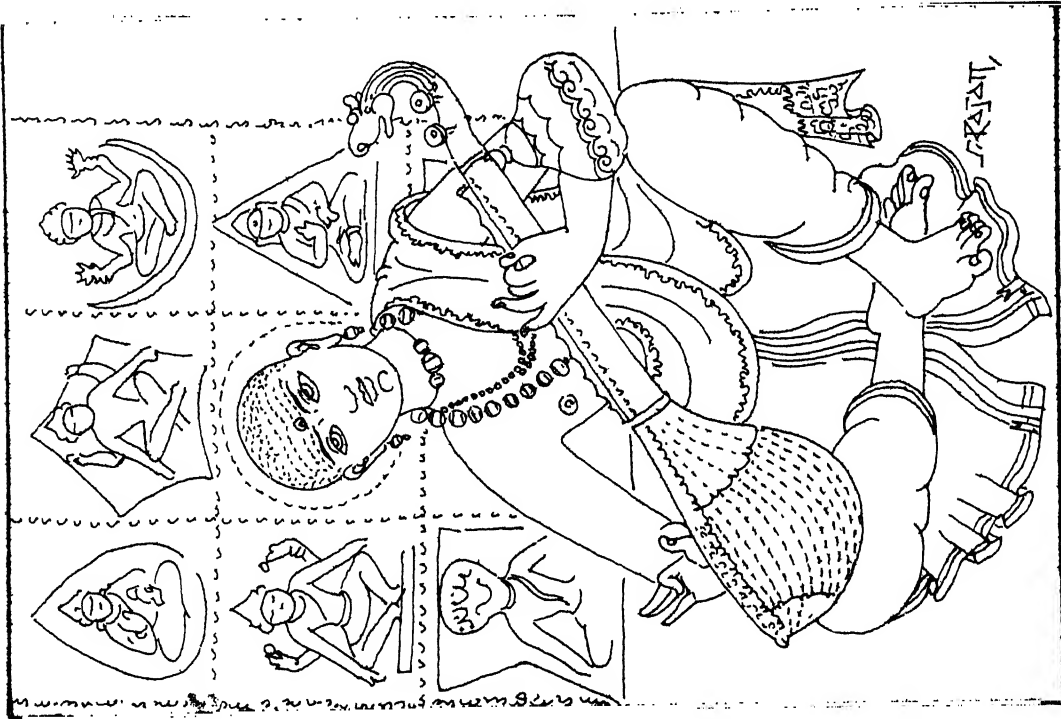
‘She tries to explore the *aveçarika* in the *gandhara grama* so that she could unite with her husband ; but her tears trickle down her cheeks on the strings of the *veēna*. Consequently, the strings do not produce the desired *murcchanas* for the right effect.’

— *Treatise on Ancient Hindu Music* by  
Aruna Bhattacharya (K.P. Bagchi & Co.)



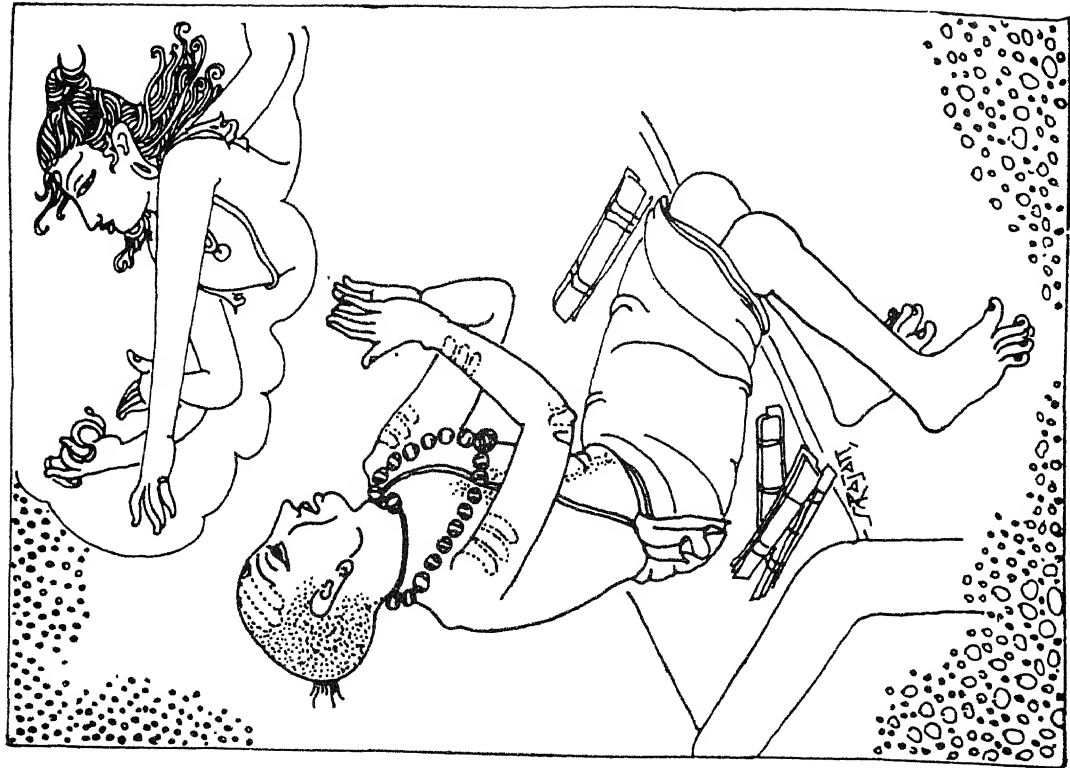
**SRI TYAGARAJA**

Fragrant Gold  
(By S. Rajam, Musician-Artist)

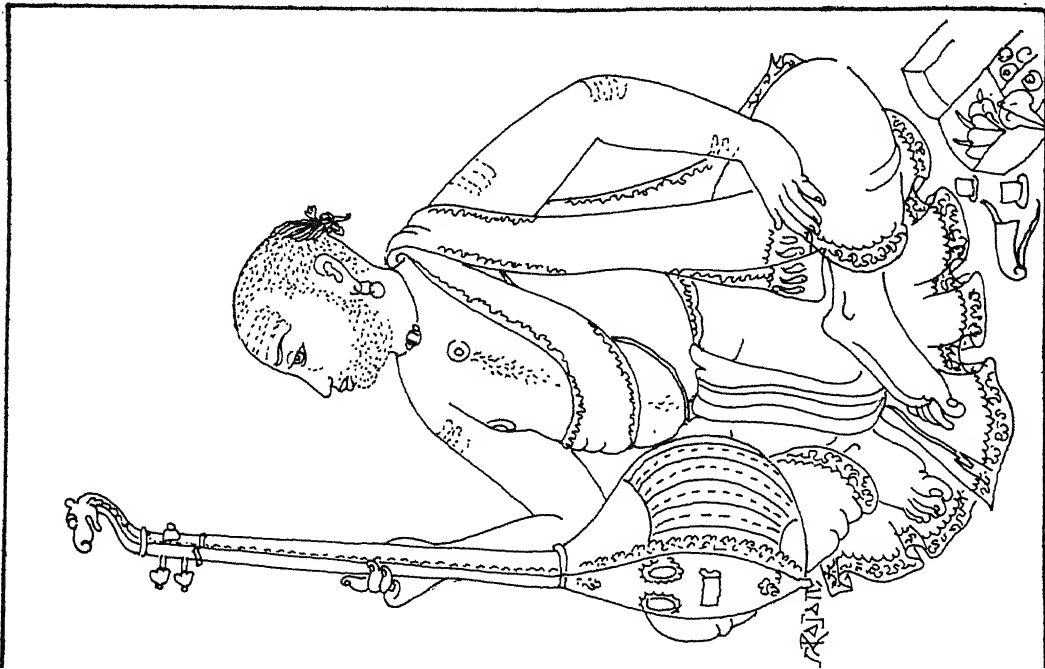


**SRI MUTHUSWAMI DIKSHITAR**

Architect of Raga Forms  
(By S. Rajam, Musician-Artist)



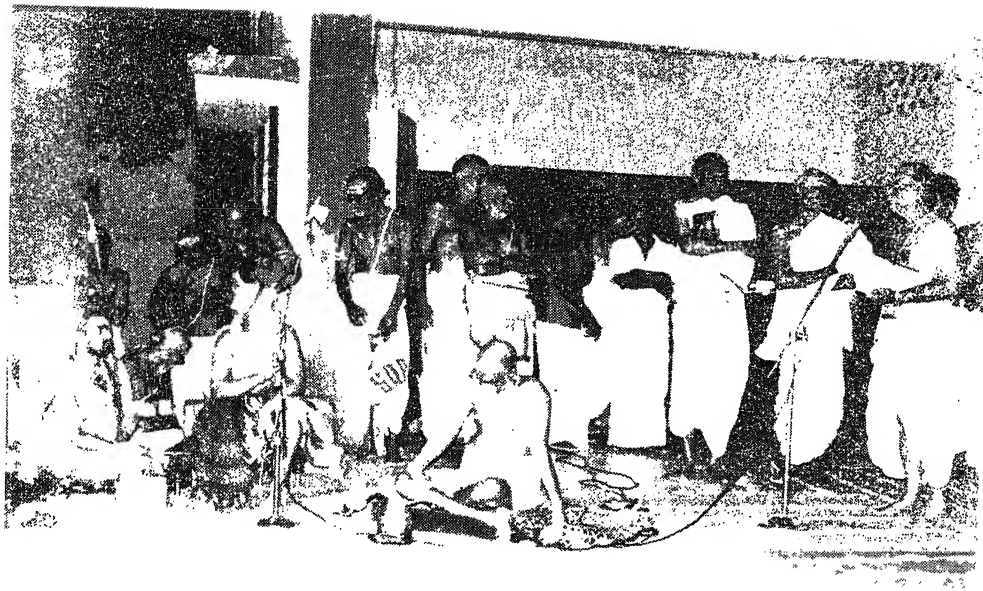
Sri Gopalakrishna Bharati



TALAPRASTARA SYAMA SASTRI

(Bv S. Raiam. Musician-Artist)

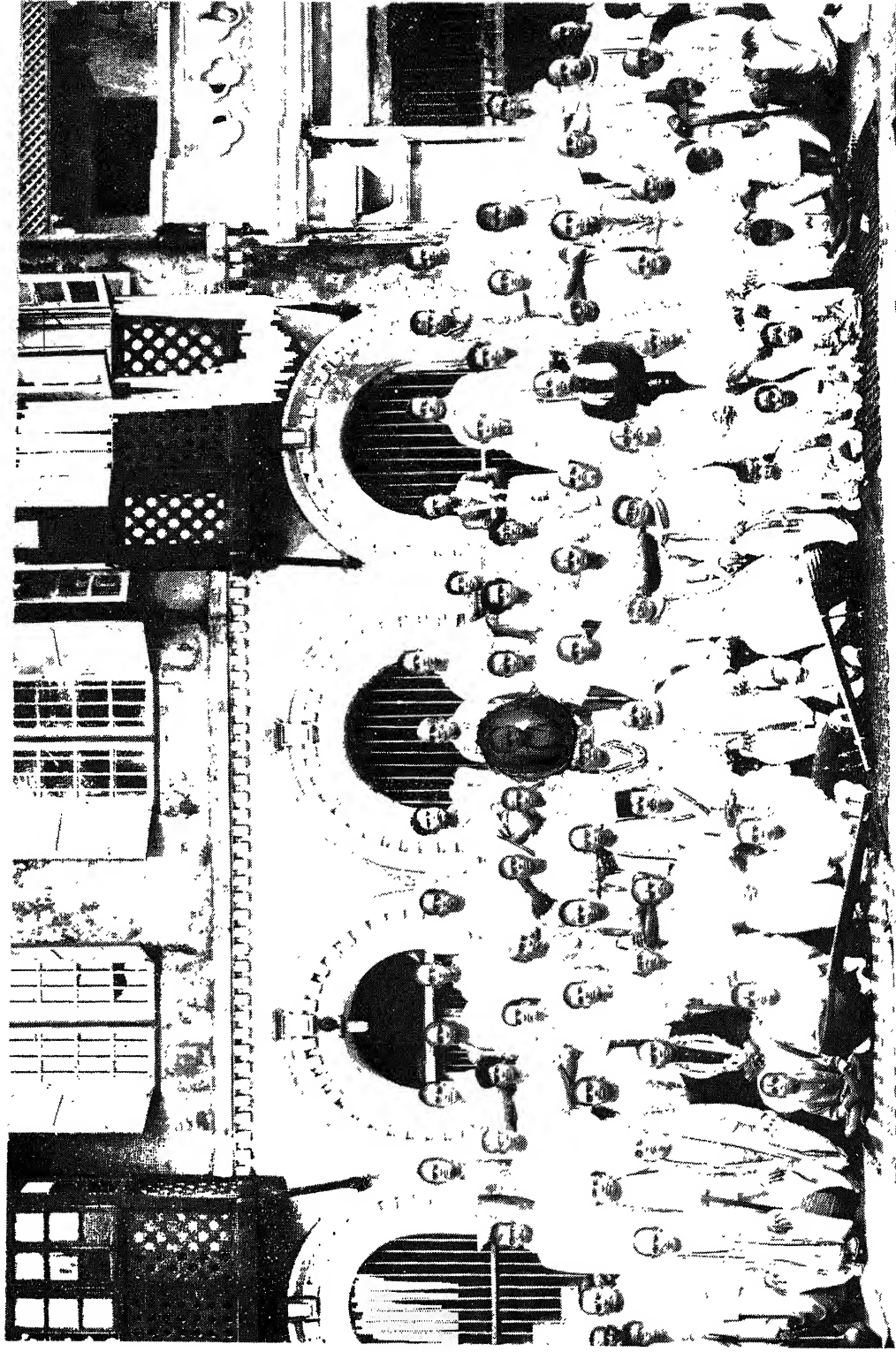




The author is speaking at the function releasing *A Garland*.



Jagatguru Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swamigal releasing '*A Garland*', the first copy being received by Sri Haridos Giri Swamigal on June 19, 1990 at Kanchipuram. Sri Vijayendra Sarawati Swamigal is all smiles.



**KRISHNA BHAJANA MANDIRAM ANNUAL FUNCTION 1932-33**

Mandhai S. Krishna Ayyar with a galaxy of musicians like Tiger, Mudicondan, Papanasam Sivan, Madurai Mani, Gopu, Rajagopala Sarma, Ganesier, Palghat Ramachandran, Parur Sundaram Ayyar and several others.

# A

## ABHINAVAGUPTACHARYA - MUSICOLOGIST:

Dr. R.S. Nagar observes:

' There were probably many commentaries on *Natya Sastra*; but *Abhinavabharati* is the most renowned and erudite one. It is the only key to open the vast treasures of *Natya Sastra*. '

Abhinavaguptacharya wrote the work *Natyavedavriti* or *Abhinavabharati*. It is said that he hailed from Kashmir and belonged to the Sphota School of Kashmir. His period is not mentioned.

\* \* \*

## ALATHUR BROTHERS - VOCAL DUO:

**Srinivasa Ayyar:**

**(January 21, 1912 - 1980)**

**Sivasubramania Ayyar :**

**(1916 - June 28, 1965)**

Alathur Brothers came together in training and throughout their musical career were the most prominent and popular duo till death snatched away Sivasubramania Ayyar. They were not consanguineous brothers. Srinivasa, son of Angarai Sankara Srowtigel and Lakshmi Ammal and born at Ariyalur came from a tamil family while Sivasubramania, son of Vidwan Venkateswara Ayyar and Lakshmi Ammal was a telugu. But both started their training in music under Venkateswara Ayyar and there ensued an enduring musical coparcenary fostered by common training and cemented by a spiritual bondage *sans* jealousy. Of course, there did occur differences once when the Music Academy, Madras decided to confer the prestigious title of 'Sangita Kalanidhi'. Srinivasa wanted the other to receive first being the son of his guru and an equal partner, his own age being secondary, while Sivasubramania would not accept it saying that seniority in age alone counted. Finally it was resolved to cast lots before the photo of the Guru and the title went to Sivasubramania Ayyar in 1964; and Srinivasa Ayyar got it in 1965. (The title is yet to be given jointly as is done in the case of Nobel Prize.) Sivasubramania was seven and Srinivasa was eleven when they started their training under the father of the former and they were compared to the companionship of Krishna and Kuchela while at school by Srinivasa Ayyar himself though he did not specify who was Krishna and who was Kuchela. Srinivasa Ayyar was a scholar in sanskrit, was Secretary to the Tyagabrahma Mahotsava Sabha, Tiruvaiyaru and was the son-in-law of Valadi Krishna Ayyar, an eminent musician and teacher.

Pudukottai Dakshinamurti Pillai was their close friend, philosopher and guide and the Karaikudi Veena Brothers were their patrons. Sivasubramania Ayyar played on veena and kanjira for sometime and was intimately associated with the percussion maestros, Palghat Mani Ayyar and Palani Subramania Pillai. Alathur Brothers were the fourth generation disciples of Sri Tyagaraja through Manambuchavadi Venkatasubba Ayyar. The two musicians had thus imbibed the best of music and laya through inheritance, training and association.

The Duo made their debut in 1928 at the Tyagaraja Festival, Tiruvaiyaru and then gave a performance during the Guru Pooja in the famous Dakshinamoorthi Temple, Tiruvarur in 1928 and soon shot into fame and popularity. Were noted for their true traditional values and specialisation in laya and pallavi. They synchronised well, had attractive voice-blend and enjoyed a wide repertoire.

Apart from the honours from the Music Academy, the Travancore Court appointed them as Asthana Vidwans. The fact that the brothers were both honoured by the Academy separately shows the high level of expertise and talents they enjoyed both individually and collectively. Sangita Nataka Academy Award was presented to Srinivasa Ayyar in 1968. Alathur Brothers had no peers among duos in expertise, elegance, fame and stature.

\* \* \*

**ALLAM KOTESWARA RAO - GOTTUVADYAM VIDWAN: (b. May 14, 1933)**

The unfretted gottuvadyam, also called Vichitra Veena, is such a demanding instrument calling for expertise and dedication that just a few have mastered it in the annals of Carnatic music after Tiruvidaimarudur Sakharana Rao and Budalur Krishnamurti Sastri. Allam Koteswara Rao is one of the very few vidwans now who are proficient in it. Born in a family of musicians in Andhra Pradesh, he was initiated in music by his elder brother and Pemmaraju Lakshmiapati. He learnt playing on gottuvadyam under Saride Subbarao, a renowned violin artiste till 1950, when he started giving performances on All India Radio, Vijayawada. He enriched his expertise by undergoing further training under A. Narayana Ayyar at Madras. Was Staff Artiste, All India Radio for 24 years till 1986. Has been giving performances in sabhas, All India Radio and Doordarshan.

\* \* \*

**AMBHUJAM KRISHNA - LYRICIST: (d. October 20, 1989)**

Ambhujam Krishna, a Home Science Graduate of Delhi University came into the renowned TVS family of Madurai-Madras on her marriage with the distinguished industrialist T.S. Krishna. Daughter of Madurai Ranga Ayyangar, she had her training in music under Karaikudi Ganesan and Madurai Ganesa Bhagavata. A staunch devotee of God and an ardent lover of arts, she took to

composing in sanskrit, telugu, tamil, hindi and manipravalam (macaronic). The compositions are noted for fragrance of imagination, chaste language, clarity of thought and spontaneity. Her lyrics are brought out in four volumes of 'Geethamala'. Her colossal output was not the result of planned exercise but were outpourings of a genius blessed with a mind that was sharp and an imagination that liaised with the best and the noble.

As she was not a musician, she availed of the services of a host of musical and dance stalwarts to set her six hundred songs to tune like:

Aadinaaye Kanna  
Nee Poi Azhaithu Vaadi }  
Kudhittodi Varaai Guhane }  
Rajunaite Brothuvemo }  
Krishna Leela Maduryam }  
Radha Madhavam }  
Aadum Paadanai }  
Invocation song addressed  
to Mukkuruni Pillaiyar, Madurai  
En Azhaganai Azhaithu Vaarai Sakhi

T.N. Seshagopalan  
V.V. Sadagopan  
Dr. S. Ramanathan  
Madurai N. Krishnan  
K.R. Kedaranathan

Dr. Semmangudi Srinivasier  
Anantalakshmi Sadagopan.

Her songs are adopted for music and dance concerts. The composer had thoughtfully utilised different musicians of repute to ensure that sahitya–bhava carries sangita–bhava.

\* \* \*

#### ANANDA DASA - COMPOSER:

(c. 1650)

Ananda Dasa was born at Cheekala Paravi on the banks of the Tungabhadra and was initiated by Sreesa Dasa. He wrote the '*Kirtana Gite*' a compendium on Bhagavad Gita in kannada with the signature of Kamalesu Vittala. He was honoured by the Maratha King Chatrapathi Shivaji.

\* \* \*

#### R. ANANTAKRISHNA SARMA - MUSICIAN-TEACHER: (b. JAN. 23, 1893)

Versatile as a vocalist, violinist and vainika, R. Anantakrishna Sarma was a life-long teacher and a scholar in telugu. A collection of his literary essays and speeches and 108 songs of Annamacharya set to music by him with notation were published in 1954. He has published '*Ganakala*', rendered into telugu forty padas of Purandaradasa and translated Jayappa's '*Nritta Ratnavali*' into telugu for the Andhra Pradesh Sangeet Natak Academy.

Service: Teacher in telugu, Maharajah's College, Mysore for 38 years  
Reader in Music, S.V. Oriental Institute, Tirupati  
Vice President, Andhra Pradesh Sangeet Academy.

The musician–teacher has been honoured by various institutions :

Gana Kala Prapurna  
Gana Kala Sindhu  
Sangita Kala Ratna  
Certificate of Merit  
Fellowship  
D.Lit. (*honoris causa*)  
Sangita Kalanidhi  
Asthana Vidwan

By Andhra Music Conference  
By Music Conference, Mysore  
By Music Conference, Bangalore  
Music Academy, Madras 1958.  
By the Sangit Natak Akademy, New Delhi.  
By Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati  
By Music Academy, Madras-1974  
Mysore Palace.

The highly distinguished scholar–musician was the son of Rallapalle Krishnamacharya and Alamelu Ammal. Studied alankara and vyakarana in Maharajah's College for Sanskrit, Mysore and Parakala Math. Inheriting musical knowledge from his father, he had his training in music under —

Kari Giri Rayan,  
Chocka Rama Rao and  
Bidaram Krishnappa.

\* \* \*

## V. ANANTARAMA AYYAR - VOCALIST:

(b. Dec. 14, 1914.)

Was born at  
of  
Musical training under

Nagapattinam  
T. Veeraswami Ayyar.  
Plate Venkatarama Ayyar of Nagapattinam and  
Jagadeesa Ayyar of Talagnayar.

Passed the higher vocal music teacher's training and served as music teacher in N.D. High School, Nagapattinam during 1965-1974. Has been singing at the Tiruvaiyaru Aradhana, etc., for over twenty years. Since 1986 is in charge of the Tyagaraja Kendra, Tiruvarur. Conducts pictorial exhibition of the Trinity and has published books like —

Tiruchinnamalai  
Tamil Marai Isai Malar  
Sri Desika Prabhandha Isai Malar  
Bhakta Tyagaraja Musical drama, etc. -

He plays on veena also. The Music Academy, Madras has granted a special pension to him for his services spanning over half a century.

\* \* \*

## H.S. ANASUYA KULKARNI - VOCALIST & INSTRUMENTALIST: (20th Cent.)

Anasuya Kulkarni is said to be proficient in Carnatic as well as Indonesian music in its different styles and schools having had the opportunity to learn it during her parents' sojourn there where Indian cultural associations in the past had been pronounced. She plays Carnatic music on Anklung, a bamboo instrument of Bali Isles and has demonstrated it at the Music Academy, Madras and elsewhere. (It is not known whether it resembles the Gettu Vadyam of Avadayarkoil Harihara Bhagavatar.)

Anasuya had her training in Carnatic music under the distinguished R.R. Keshavamurthy and T. Chowdiah.

\* \* \*

## ANDAVAN PICHAİ ( ANDAVANANDA MATAJI) - COMPOSER:

(Sept. 6, 1899 - Nov. 19, 1990)

'Ullam Urugudaiya, Muruga' popularised by T.M. Soundararajan is a crisp soulful song favourite with people of all ages and heard at temple festivals and celebrations. The tune is captivating and the sahitya is full of religious fervour, emotional bhava and devotional rasa. Several such pieces have been so sung by popular musicians like D.K. Pattammal, the late renowned vocalist Maharajapuram Santhanam and the (late) Tiruvarur Namasivayam. Diverse forms of compositions like *andadis*, *pathikams*, *sathakams*, *namavalis*, *kirtanas*, etc. have been brought out by her. The author of all these was Maragathavalli, daughter of T.V. Narayana Sastri, Vakil, High Court and wife of M.G. Narasimha Sastri, also an advocate.

Maragathavalli is credited with God-vision at the tender age of ten which set her on the path of devotion. Mother of four sons and two daughters, Maragathavalli reached the sacred Rishikesh in 1953 and Swami Sivananda initiated her into the order of sanyasis on March 3, 1954 with the name of Andavananda Mataji, popularly known as Andavan Pichai. Of course she continued to remain in the family – so near the family and so far detached from it. She is a lofty example of how family life is no hindrance to spiritual elevation as pointed out by Tiruvalluvar.

Her songs are popularised by the Andavan Pichai Mandali. About fifty songs with notation have been published in '*Kirtanamala*' and her biography has been brought out by the Divine Life Society. Several other books on her songs have been published too. Andavan Pichai's songs glitter with alliteration and metre, rhythm and melody. Maragavathavalli had attended no school and that makes

her passion for Godliness and choosing the vehicle of devotional songs to attain the Ultimate more remarkable. Her songs are in tamil, telugu and sankskrit.

\* \* \*

**ARIVANAR - MUSICOLOGIST :**

**(Last Tamil Sangham Period)**

Hailed from Cettrur in Pandia kingdom or Tirucheraï near Kumbakonam. Authored the works *Pannvarrohai*, *Ayntogai* and *Panchamarabhu*. The last one deals with music, musical instruments and dance extensively. The work has been republished by V.R. Deivasikhamani Gounder, Erode.

\* \* \*

**KARUKURICHI ARUNACHALAM - NAGASWARA MAESTRO: (1921-1964)**

A disciple of Kalakad Ramanarayana Bhagavatar, a senior vidwan, Arunachalam had further training in nagaswaram under the wizard T. N. Rajarathinam Pillai. Known for his melodious rendition, he was highly popular and was one of the most sought-after nagaswara artistes. He imbibed the vocal and instrumental styles and genius of his gurus. His nagaswaram play was captivating and exhilarating. As a boy he was making garlands of flowers for livelihood. After training, he presented garlands of ragas, incidentally being gazetted now in this book '*Another Garland*', a hat trick of garlands! At the height of his popularity, he expired, eight years after his preceptor Rajarathinam died.

Born of Balavesam and Chellammal at Karukurichi in Tirunelveli district, he had initial training under his father and made his debut in his eleventh year and enjoyed a meteoric rise. His rendition in the disc of the film song '*Singara Velane Deva*' is a masterpiece. It is said that the cine field colossus Sivaji Ganesan requisitioned this gramophone record to the Bombay Airport to satisfy his craving to hear it again before his departure to the West! The song set a new trend of voco-nagaswara ensemble.

Arunachalam was honoured posthumously by the Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram. He died prematurely at the prime of his professional career - a great loss to the Art. His rendition laid emphasis on soothing melody, public appeal and captivating delivery.

\* \* \*

**HARMONIUM A. ARUNACHALAPPA - HARMONIST: (1899 - Feb. 2, 1966)**

Bhajan or drama, enters harmonium; if it is a classical concert, touch it not. From Tagore to the ordinary musician, harmonium was an anathema. It was banned from All India Radio and some institutions too. The reason is the



instrument's inability to provide graces like continuity, curves and gamakas (modulations) which are *sine qua non*. Hemambikadas Subramania Dikshitar was a towering exception as he was able to coax the instrument as only he could. He had, as it appeared, a secret deal with it !

A. Arunachalappa of Karnataka was another who was famous for mastery and inventiveness in playing on harmonium and also violin. Hailing from a weaver's family and orphaned early in life, he fought his way through. Quite strangely he had his initial training from his football team-mate Narayanaswami and later Violin Puttappa coached him. As Dikshitar lent grace to the concerts of Flautist Palladam Sanjiva Rao, Arunachalappa gave solidity and warmth to the vocalist with a soaring voice, B.S. Raja Ayyangar. 'Jagadodharana' the 78 rpm record is an evidence of it. Honnappa Bhagavata is a disciple of Arunachalappa.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya declined permission to a harmonist providing accompaniment to B.S. Raja Ayyangar. Later he relented and in fact honoured the harmonist with a gold medal. He declared, 'I had a gold medal for Ayyangar. After hearing Arunachalappa, I had to leave the concert for a short while to get another for him'. Likewise Krishnaraja Wodeyar of Mysore forgot his intense dislike of the instrument when he heard this artiste.

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### KIVALUR KUCHELA

A ragamuffin Kuchela unkempt, unwashed, entered Violin maestro Malaikottai Govindaswami Pillai's house and demanded, 'Where is that fellow Govindaswami ?'

The 'intruding fellow' was provoking by word and deed and was found to be a hard nut to be wafted away. Papa Venkataramayya, then an apprentice under Pillai, girded up his loins to throw the insolent old mendicant out like a marshal in legislature. As he neared the old man, Pillai fortunately entered. On seeing the Kuchela, he fell at his feet full of humility and respect !

Who was that 'fellow' ?

T. Sankaran records that it was none other than Pillai's mentor, Kivalur Gavai Ramachandra Ayyar who was nonchalantly humming *Devagandhari* raga probably asking the Lord of Malaikottai ( Rockfort), as Tyagaraja did of Rama, 'if Sugriva could be protected for his beautiful neck '*Su-griva*', why not he help him (Kivalur Kuchela) for his melodious musical voice.'

Whether He gave succour otherwise or not, the Lord of Malaikottai did save him from physical assault !

\* \* \*

## GURU'S SOLICITUDE

- i. Tiruvarur Kamalam, hereditary danseuse, Tyagaraja temple, Tiruvarur was to make her debut - *arangetram*. Her guru Muthuswami Dikshitar of the Trinity, departing from his practice of composing only in sanskrit, composed for her debut the pada varnam '*Rupamu Juchi*' (*Todi*) and the daru '*Ni Sati Deivamu*' (*Sriranjani*) in praise of the Lord. Tiger Varadachariar composed telugu sahitya for the *mukhtayi* swaras and the swaras in the charana of the pada varnam with the skill of a born varnakara. The compositions show Dikshitar's proficiency in Bharata Sastra and his command over telugu.

— (T.S. Parthasarathy)

Note:

It was Kamalam who offered her riches to relieve her guru's financial straits. Of course, Dikshitar would not accept it. It may be mentioned that Dikshitar called his disciples, the Tanjore Quartette, endearingly as 'Bharata Sreshtas' and one of them Ponnayya Pillai composed the '*Nava Ratna Mala*' (nine kritis) in his praise as an expression of gratitude. A prominent critic, known for his racy comments, decried Dikshitar for taking a danseuse as a disciple. **Dikshitar noticed her art and dedication while the critic strained his energies to see the flesh and bones in her.** Probably the film song 'Aattathai parthidamal Aalai, Aalai parkirar' (without watching the dance, stares at the person! - at the person!) applies to the genre! That is the difference. This is highlighted in the lives of Buddha and Sankara.

- ii. Chengalvaraya Sastri of Cheyyur gave a new '*sabda*' for each and every performance of his disciple Cheyyur Sarada lending 'value-added' attraction to her popular recitals.
- iii. When one of his disciples could not play on violin well in spite of all efforts, Mysore Chowdiah, provoked to the extreme, gave him enough money and asked him to leave. The disheartened pupil had left for the railway station on his way home. Chowdiah brooded over the boy's disappointment and his bhava - laden heart melted. He speeded to the station in his car and brought him back!
- iv. Naina Pillai understood the distress of Chittoor Subramania Pillai's mother. Without telling his disciple, he went on sending rupees ninety every month to enable his prime disciple to continue his apprenticeship. Naina Pillai had dozens of disciples and would not take a pie as fee.

These show the basis for and the truth behind the tamil saying that 'he who gave *vidya* - learning - with solicitude (*daya*) - is a father'.

# B

## **Dr. S. BALACHANDER - A MAGNIFICENT CLASSICIST: (January 18, 1927 – April 13, 1990)**

Here is his self-assessment true to fact:

' A veena virtuoso of international fame whose unparalleled genius of the veena elevates the soul and to whom the veena is verily almost a part of his body. '

Karaikudi Sambasiva Ayyar called him '*Simham*' (Lion). A resume of his career, which S. Krishnan suspects as having been written by the Veena Maestro himself, provides the perfect epitaph to his glamorous life:

' An uncompromising traditionalist and classicist, Balachander considers protecting, preserving and promoting the pure values of Indian Classical music his sole aim and mission in his life. '

Veena Balachander was the most colourful personality among Classical Carnatic artistes, an enlightened interpreter of Indian music and a multi-dimensional personality of vast parts, deep penetration and quick conception with few peers. He was -

percussionist, string artiste, mock dancer, singer, poet,  
man of letters, humourist, album collector, cine actor, playback singer,  
music composer, director, photographer, chess player, art addict and above all  
a firm believer in the sacredness of music.

'The man knows exactly what he wanted and also what he was doing... His mind functioned on the basis of a pure inner logic... He never swerved from his bhakti towards God and towards Music.' (S. Krishnan). Balachander himself had recorded:

' MUSIC IS A SACRAMENT TO ME AND  
MY MUSIC IS TOTALLY DEDICATED TO GOD.'

Balachander evolved his own style of playing veena which was close to vocal rendition described as gayaki style.

He strode like a colossus among musicians, music - lovers and others and he was an agnostic to criticism. An expert publicist, he never stooped to gain personal ends. That marks him out of the rest. He consciously placed himself on an elevated pedestal. That never prevented him from appreciating the good in others. Masculine assertiveness was part of his innate self and he departed at the pinnacle of his artistic expression, musical wisdom and technical wizardry.

Was a master of manipulation of the veena in vicranti or breath-taking speed with intensive and unusual gamakas of absolute virtuosity. His varied life is a lesson to apprentices in dedication to and mastery in art. Whatever he touched was gold absolute. He dwarfed others by the unique personality and image he acquired. Veena was a humble instrument at his hands and his will prevailed always or was executed.

\* \* \*

Grandson of Rao Saheb Vaidyanatha Ayyar, author of popular works on Audit, Accounts and Book-keeping and son of V. Sundaram Ayyar and Parvati alias Chellammal, Balachander was born at Madras in a home which pulsed, buzzed and buzzled with music and musicians. Father, an advocate who forsook law, was a connoisseur and patron of music. Brother S. Rajam (b. 1919) has been a brilliant exponent of classical music. Two sisters - Jayalakshmi and Saraswati were good singers. Instead of litigants, musicians thronged his house and in this congenial environment of melody, young Balachander grew thirsting for acquisition of musicianship and advent. He wrote:

" Not having had a 'Guru' and (by the bountiful grace of God) being entirely self-taught, I wish to acknowledge that the music of certain sangeetha vidwans had tremendously inspired and influenced me... "

His musical personality grew like the wild 'Tulasi' plant (sacred basil) in the classical music garden of cultured Mylapore with its magnificent temple, attractive tank, broad Mada Streets and cultured habitation with his 'Nadu Street' at the centre. The temple tower beckoned him to rise up to its height and the tank laid bare the depths of knowledge he could make his own. The broad streets drew his mind to the message of Tyagaraja in '*Chakkani Rajamarga*'. Musical precocity was evident when he began playing on kanjira providing accompaniment to top artistes of the day. Started playing on harmonium, bulbul tara, tar shenai, dilruba, mridangam and tabla.

S. Rajam (18) and Balachander (10) gave duet concerts all over India and Sri Lanka under the name 'Prabhat Prodigy Stars' and 'South Indian Prodigies'. Like Lav and Kuslav, the two fair, beautiful and talented boys were the rage of the day and cynosure of all eyes. When Shantaram, the eminent film director, presented him with a tabla, Balachander was a percussionist already. But when Krishna Bai presented him with an old sitar on January 16, 1938 at Karachi, it acted as a catalyser taking him to a different mould from percussion to string, rhythm to melody and accompanist to soloist. At eighteen, he switched over to veena and there ensued a durable, spiritual association. He was a yogi who had scaled the magnificent heights of sadhana on veena. He had great respect for Karaikudi Sambasiva Ayyar. Quite soon, he evolved and reached the zenith of his own – the Balachander style. He could not stoop to play for the gallery. It looked as if he was a divine messenger deputed to lay down norms for play and

concerts and a code of conduct for artistes. His was pure classical play bringing out the exhilarating panorama and depth of raga swaroopas on veena. Like Ekalavya and Sarabha Sastri, he assimilated the best and built his own musical edifices thereon. Environment, observation and assimilation (without regular tuitions) probably qualified him for unique experimentation and adventure in quest of the unexplored frontiers of melody and classical virtuosity. He averred :

" I have no 'guru' but God and  
my music-making is an act of piety. "

\* \* \*

' The music of some tremendously inspired and influenced me ever since childhood and, therefore, in everlasting esteem, the following homage is the expression :

" In spite of the passing of years,  
In spite of living in an era new,  
Their music is still in my ears  
As they are the best I ever knew. " '

One of the six stanzas in praise of Tiger Varadachariar reads:

" He who commanded the respect of one and all  
Was a giant in size but a soft child at heart.  
While many other musicians might rise or fall  
His glory, for eternity, will ever remain apart."

One of the six about T.N. Rajarathinam reads:

" With his flight of creative imagination so stunning,  
With his great genius solidly stumped in every note,  
With his lofty ideas of improvisation ever running,  
He won all other musicians' unanimous vote ! "

And this from the four on Tiruvalangadu Sundaresa Iyer:

" There was a unique Violinist whose title was 'Suswaram'.  
His playing was perfect, his phrases pretty and precise.  
He had a placid style so nice to derive inspiration from  
Whose speciality was rendering Ragas, pure and concise. "

There are six stanzas on Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer. One reads :

" Discarding monotony, he never sang the same way twice —  
Every moment fresh, every note scent-sprinkled and fragrant.  
His sonorous sweet music could even melt iron, not just ice.  
He was endowed with a voice, so rich and so very vibrant. "

There are but three stanzas devoted to Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar

whom he admired greatly as a person but for whose music he – elsewhere noted – did not have great regard. One stanza:

" His frank heart, bigger than his body, was as pure as his ringing voice  
(While a few others have tactfully cashed-in, on all kinds of noise).  
For impeccable character, honesty and nobility, he was the first choice  
Who, at other's fame and success, did surely exult and rejoice."

There have been precocious children but many a budding flower tends to fade out and disappear. But perennial, fresh and fresher showers descended on this intellectual. Whatever he touched was grand, bold and unique.

Many noted with awe and astonishment or admiration, and some with dismay and disapproval, his inexplicable addiction to coax, extract or squeeze out what he visualised from the veena forgetting the presence of the audience as if he was alone with his veena. He used to enter into an amorous soliloquy with it absorbed in musical perceptions and explorations impelled by a sense of total surrender to artistic instincts and innovative, creative endeavours. His acute passion to seek and lay bare the depths and heights of musical excellence and possibilities and portray the unlimited vistas of ragas was phenomenal.

' It is something like an organic thing which develops not only in their brains, but in their hearts, their nerves and their viscera, something that their creative instinct evolves out of the experiences of their soul and body and at last it becomes so oppressive that they must rid themselves of it. '

This observation of Somerset Maugham fits Balachander admirably. He submitted himself to the pangs of delivery and the audience had to suffer them too since none else was willing to expose them to such noble perceptions in the classical field. The birth-pangs one could see in his tenacious efforts to coax a particular brika or curve or continuity out of the veena he loved and took to task like an angry teacher, hard-headed parent on a turbulent child.

Made his debut at the 'Model Hall', Mylapore as a vainika with Tiruvalangadu Sundaresa Ayyar and Ramnad Eswaran on violin and mridangam respectively. There was no occasion for the glittering artiste to look back till the Lord beckoned him at Bhilai. The software genius was swallowed by the Steel town. His concert orientation was to provide the audience what he thought they needed or should be given. His approach was that of a father, teacher, doctor and law-giver – all in one and one can easily trace the inspiration for the dictum expounded by him and extracted below to his staunch belief that 'music was a sacrament to him and his music was totally dedicated to God'. Advaitic philosophy hails man as but a phenomenon of God subject to realisation of the fact. His jealous interest in the rasika could easily be understood in this context. There is a spiritual element in it. It was not their entertainment he bothered about but he was intent on preserving the roots of his own culture as reflected in the ancient art and it is

'The rasika's love for music has no commercial angle, whereas, we musicians are paid to perform for them ! To us, it is certainly a commercial proposition, a commercial commitment !! Hence from where we sit, they are purer at heart !!! As a musician, your responsibility is to see that, although it is a commercial arrangement, you do not make your art commercial !!!!'

(*Sruti* - August 1989)

According to Balachander, his inaugural veena concert was on November 6, 1943. His first and last veena duet was on September 24, 1944. It was with Prof. K.S. Narayanaswami Ayyar. 'I wished to enjoy full freedom as a soloist and not get tagged along to another and make every rendering of ours repetitive, monotonous and set-patterned.' He was Artiste, All India Radio for about two and half years during 1942-44. Balachander gave a series of concerts with raga alapanas and tanams from July 9, 1967 '*sans songs, sans kritis, sans neraval, sans tala, sans galatta, sans amali – tumali, sans* sensationalism, no rest and no intermission' and proved that ragas alone could keep the audience fully engrossed. 'That was the Soul of Indian Music.'

\* \*

### **Disc recordings:**

Balachander was a remarkable recording artiste from 1962 and emerged as 'the Carnatic Classical musician with the longest list (25) of L.P. records'. A musical Gavaskar or Kapil Dev or Pele! On his twelve-record series of 72 melakarta ragas, he claimed with evident pride, 'My immortal legacy to musical posterity. A veritable musical treasure'.

### **Concert Tours:**

1962 witnessed Balachander leading a team comprising flautist Ramani and percussionists Sivaraman and Ramabhadran calling it 'Sangeetha Madras'. The coast to coast concert tour of USA was an instant success. Then followed tours of France, USSR, Poland, Hungary, China, Malaysia, Singapore, Japan, South Korea, Sweden and Mauritius.

### **Films:**

He had a dynamic and brilliant career as actor, music composer, music director, producer and director. At the acme of his success, he left the cine field – a loss to the screen world, to which he had brought a fresh look with striking results.

## **Titles & Honours:**

Quite a large number like —

Vainika Swayambu	Kala Sikhamani
Raga Brahman	Veena Yogi
Nada Brahman	Nada Yogi
Veena Praveena	Veena Varaprasadi
Vainika Kalanidhi	Abhinava Narada
Sangeet Natak Akademy Award in 1977.	
D. Lit. by World Academy of Arts & Culture, Tirupati.	

Regrettably the Music Academy, Madras had not looked beyond his unique attitudes and independence in approach to men and matters and confer on him its prestigious title 'Sangita Kalanidhi' even as independent India treated Sardar Vallabhai Patel. Undoubtedly Balachander's musicianship was colossal. Of course, his music was for the elite who sought after classical finesse and explorations as Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar and Mani Ayyar were wont to do. It was not the Music Academy alone that was at fault. Even the Presidential honours did not reach him! There was a positive unmusical approach in his case. It can be remedied. Why not confer the title posthumously as it was done to Patel.

## **Crusades:**

The life-history of S. Balachander without his crusades is Hamlet without the Prince. The crusades shed much light on his indomitable satyagrahic character ; and the tenacity with which he pursued his incursions resembled those of the heroes of Thermopylae and Nakkiran and Kattabomman. That they antagonised musical hierarchy, establishments and patrons did not weigh with him; bigger the risk, more intense was his lone battle and unrelenting his approach. A veritable Hampden indeed!

One was to prove that Swati Tirunal as a composer was a myth. He felt that Semmangudi Dr. Srinivasa Ayyar had been irresponsible in extolling the virtues of the erstwhile Travancore ruler in his biography of Swati Tirunal and he termed the unlimited tributes and claims made on behalf of the ruler as 'Swati Hoax'. In his 'An Open Letter dated August 16, 1985' on 'He wrote a Book and Kindled the Genie' - immaculately documented and printed, he extends his challenge. In pursuit of his conscience, conviction and devotion to Art and Truth, he had spent unlimited energy and personal funds that were scarce. Unfortunately his contentions were met by curses and noise and not by reasonable rebuttal that



' Those who spoke well of Swati Tirunal stood to benefit;  
 those who did not even think of him would reap no consequence; and  
 you know what happens when someone speaks ill of him ' –

an allusion to Balachander's death (*Vide Sruti* Vol.68). With his accustomed foresight, Balachander had averred that because of the disputation, he might not be conferred with the title of 'Sangita Kalanidhi' and that he might be excluded from playing in the Music Academy Festival ! He declared that he had faith in God, that he was left with just a few years and that none could debar him from stating the truth. He thought that the elevation of Swati Tirunal to the stature of the Carnatic Musical Trinity was the 'biggest musical fraud of the century' and objected to placing Swati Tirunal's photo on par with the portraits of the Trinity. He felt that the Music Academy had abdicated its moral duty and responsibility. Balachander died leaving the case to the decision of posterity. There is a tragic element in this. Even in his ashes cries the tragic issue.

The other crusade related to Dr. M. Balamurali Krishna *vis-a-vis* his claim at the Music Academy, Madras that he had created new ragas. Balachander protested pointing out 'the lie in the claim.. quoting books and references'. Dr. Semmangudi Srinivasa Ayyar concurred with his views. Dr. V. Raghavan, the learned Secretary of the Academy admitted that he had overlooked facts. After deliberations, the Experts Advisory Committee of the Academy negated in effect Balamurali Krishna's claim. (*Sruti*).

The multi-faceted vainika had left eight albums with over a thousand pages of 19.75" x 14.5" containing a mine of information on his life of turbulent grace. Grandeur impregnated with celestial fire is eternally impatient and searches for greener fields for achievement. 'One does not fall into Love; One rises to it', said Tim Piggot Smith. Even so, Balachander rose to love music and his impressionable life was a model of passionate dedication to art; he stayed at the dizzy heights he chose and reached while yet a boy. He is a classic example of emotional integration and total identity with true art. He died on the eve of the Tamil New Year Day. (Pramoduta).

That Tamil New Year eve brought gloom  
 To ardent lovers of Music and Arts  
 When thy ardent, unquenchable fires  
 And radiant vigour were sniffed out.

O Strong Soul, by what shore  
 Tarriest thou now? Sure that force,  
 Has not been left in vain.  
 In the resounding melody-house, vast  
 And virtuous is practised that strength  
 Zealous, beneficent, firm !

— (After Mathew Arnold)

## **P. BALAKRISHNAN - VIOLINIST & PEDAGOGUE: (b. August 10, 1914)**

P. Balakrishnan had his musical training under Tanjore K. Ponniah Pillai, a descendant of the famous Tanjore Quartette. He had a distinguished career as

Principal,	Sri Venkateshwara College of Music & Dance, Tirupati
Professor, Vice Principal and	
Principal - in - charge,	Central College of Carnatic Music, Madras.

Balakrishnan has done research in instrumental music.

### **Disc Recordings:**

\* \* \*

## **T.R. BALAMANI - VOCALIST: (b. December 31, 1937)**

Place of birth	Parakulam, Kerala.
Parents	T.S. Ramanatha Iyer & Pachainayaki Ammal.
Musical training under	Tirupunithura Narayana Bhagavata Passed Sangeetha Vidwan course at the Central College of Carnatic Music, Madras.
Debut	1948 at Tirupunithura
Post held	Faculty member, Bharatiya Fine Arts Society Music School, Bombay for a decade till 1975.

She has given concerts in Bombay, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh and on the All India Radio and has set to tune compositions in many languages. Has been training many disciples. 'A studied solidity, firm laya command and technical and aesthetical improvisation mark her style combining an innate rapport with musical science and art', writes Dr. Sulochana Rajendran in *Shanmukha*.

\* \* \* \* \*

### **Dikshitar recommended !**

Veena Balachander played the catalytic role in getting the postal stamp issued to commemorate the birth centenary of Muthuswami Dikshitar. He wrote to Justice V.R. Krishna Ayyar and the latter interceded with the Central Minister and got it approved. Innocent Dikshitar's case too has to seek recommendations!

(Source: *Sruti*.)

Note: As the Collector of the district, the author sponsored a commemoration stamp to honour the sanctified memory of Vallalar of Vadalur, Sri Ramalinga Swamikal. Being an official, he did not go to enlist outside help. Result?

'Man will do the rational thing ' but, more often, after the grace of doing it in time is lost. This is so in all good cases and all good causes. It is perhaps a curse!

\* \* \* \* \*

**Dr. M. BALAMURALI KRISHNA - A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL MAESTRO:****(b.July 6, 1930)**

' Sruti ? No tambur is necessary for me ! '

' Laya ? No beats are needed either ! '

' Ask not for this music or that; I have them not:

Balamurali music have I. Sit down, trim thy mind ; and lend thy ears. '

That is Dr. Balamurali Krishna, a multi-dimensional genius who has left no segment of the finest of fine arts untouched. His contribution to Classical Carnatic music, light music and screen spread over half a century has been immense, substantial and unique. Dynamism with creativity, *avante garde* without overt emphasis – and all within the ample portals of the vast mansion of classicism and its hoary traditions – mark his rendition. Romantic brilliance and aesthetic appeal combine to present and provide warmth and the listener gets dissolved in cascading lakshya-based melody and scintillating rendition. His tonal artifices and effortless delivery bhava-laden and peppered with subtleties confer such solace and satisfaction that one is tempted to invoke the *Atharva Veda* (XCII) hymn :

'Sing. Sing ye forth your songs of praise.'

The scintillating *vicranti* has the effect of musical therapy, which Dr. B. Ramamurthi, the celebrated neuro surgeon has elaborated in this author's book 'A Garland'; Dr. Balamurali has thus a legitimate claim to the doctorate though it came to him *honoris causa*. Soothing melody is his *forte*. The artistic web he weaves out in his inimitable style leaves the audience spell-bound. His pronunciation of the sahitya is as matchless as that of K.B. Sundarambal in tamil. Nightingale is celebrated for its forays in melody only at nights but Balamurali's suffers no such inhibition. Notwithstanding his sobre years, the youthful vigour of his music substantiates his name 'Bala' or *vice versa*.

Born at  
of

Sankaraguptam in Andhra Pradesh,  
Pattabhiramiah, a sanskrit pandit and  
Suryakantam, a veena artiste.

He learnt music without much of guru-sishya pattern save a brief spell of six months with Parupalli Ramakrishniah Pantulu. A child prodigy, his expertise is the fruit of native wisdom and '*swayam krishi*'. It blossomed like the self-grown flower plant at a hill station blessed with varied hues and invested with fascinating fragrance assimilating the dictum of Wordsworth that self-reverence and self-knowledge lead life to sovereign power.

Balamurali Krishna made his debut at Vijayawada at the Aradhana of his guru's guru Susarla Dakshinamoorthy Sastri in 1938. The boy was given just thirty minutes to sing but he stole five times that since the thrilled audience was

incapable of cutting itself away from the cascading sweet virgin melody. By the age of nine, he was an adept on viola, violin, mridangam and kanjira. His first radio concert was in 1939. As a violinist he had accompanied stalwarts like Ariyakudi, Chembai, Maharajapuram, GNB and Parupalli. A pioneer of the morn broadcasts '*Bhakti Manjari*', he was a constant top ranker with All India Radio and Doordarshan as artiste, producer, conductor and participant in classical and quasi-classical programmes. Has given jugalbandis and solo vocals without accompanists. Reminiscent of old masters, he would give the audience intervals at concerts !

In the realm of films, he took the appropriate role of Narada in Bala Prahlada but his contribution and image in film-music are solid as playback singer, composer, conductor and director in telugu, kannada and malayalam pictures.

### Composition :

An original musician, Balamurali Krishna is an outstanding composer of about 300 kritis, varnams, tillanas, etc., from his fourteenth year. Several of his pieces are popular. On the inspiration of Swami Vimalananda of Kuttalam Mutt, he composed and later perfected seventy-two songs in seventy-two melakarta ragas in sanskrit and telugu and has published them. 'Murali' is his mudra. Has created new ragas and talas. (Chancing upon a particular claim in the souvenir of the Music Academy, Madras, Veena Balachander protested quoting books and authorities and it is said that the objection was once upheld. The permutations and combinations in the raga schemes are so insurmountable, that isolated errors are inherent in the limitless scheme). The popular Doctor is a serious promoter of his compositions unlike Patnam Subramania Ayyar and G.N. Balasubramaniam.

\* . \*

### Concert Tours abroad:

His style and melody are in heavy demand in the fertile alien soils. His tours include:

U.S.A.	Canada	France
Italy	Singapore	U.S.S.R.
Malaysia and	Sri Lanka	

### Posts held:

Artiste, All India Radio, Vijayawada	1952
Music Producer	1954
Principal, Music Colleges, Vijayawada and Hyderabad.	
Adviser, Bharath Cultural Integration Committee	

President, Madras Telugu Academy,  
State Musician, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh  
President, Andhra Pradesh Sangeeta Academy, etc.

## Publication:

' Janaka Raga Kriti Manjari ' .

## Disc recordings:

A colossal number. 'Raganga Ravali' cassettes cover his melaraga compositions.

## Titles & Honours:

Among the bagfuls, the following call for mention:

Presidential Medal		1953
Padma Sri	by President	1971
Award	by Sangeet Natak Akademy, Delhi	1975
Sangita Kalanidhi	by the Music Academy, Madras	1975
Sur Singar	by Sangeeth Peeth, Bombay	
Doctorate ( <i>Honoris Causa</i> )	by Andhra University	
National Award for Best Music Director		1975
Karnataka Award for Best Music Director		1976
National Award for Best Male playback singer		1987
Kasturi Rajaram Award		
Honorary Citizenship,	Vijayawada	
Padma Vibhushan	by President of India	
Sangita Kala Nipuna	by Mylapore Fine Arts Society	1987
Award	by Dinanath Smruti Pratishthan	1991
Sangita Kala Sikhamani	by Indian Fine Arts Society	1991
Gayaka Ratnam	by Sri Swati Tirunal Sangeetha	
	Sabha	1992
Saptagiri Sangita Vidwanmani	by Tyagaraja Trust, Tirupati	1992

His career has been a never-ending round of victories. A genius with glittering success. The buoyancy of his music is infectious and in truth, he is a Master of Melody. A penetrating experimenter of depth and easy delivery, he floods his concerts with the finer nuances of music and gliding melody with ever-fresh, invigorating phrases which expose the listener to the dazzling panorama of *lakshya – lakshana* music.

\* \* \*

## PAPANASAM BALASARASWATI - VIOLINIST:

(b. 1928)

Place of birth	:	Tittacheri near Nannilam.
Father	:	Subramania Ayyar
Musical training under	:	Needamangalam Krishnamurti Bhagavatar of Uthukadu family and Kumbakonam Rajamanickam Pillai, a famous violinist.

In her thirteenth year, Balasaraswati made her debut and has been providing accompaniment to musicians.

She has composed tamil kritis on Swamy Gnanananda Swamigal of Tirukoilur and on *Soundarya Lahari*. She is described as a good violinist.

\* \* \*

### **T. BALASARASWATI - ABHINAYA MAESTRO: (May 13, 1918 - Feb.9, 1984)**

'She was like a fabulous flower. Her abhinaya floated in the music. Her expressions were arresting and soul-satisfying. Her hands were poetic like creepers. Dignity, suggestive restraint and synchronisation of melody, rhythm, expression, all were mastered.'

— Yamini Krishnamurti.

T. Balasaraswati had the immense wealth of legacy of musical and artistic talents being the grand daughter of the legendary Veena Dhanammal and daughter of Jayammal and Govindarajulu. Had her training under Kandappa Pillai, Chinnayya Naidu and Vedantam Lakshminarasimha Sastri. Graceful in personality, endowed with a musical voice and blessed with a body that was specially moulded for abhinaya to bring out the eloquent bhavas and rasas of diverse emotions and compositions, Balasaraswati was on the stage in her teens and was the cynosure of the *cognoscenti*. I recollect that at the All India Congress Exhibition held at Royapettah in 1935 or so, S. Satyamurti gave glowing tributes to her talents and she was then just seventeen. She was very cultured. She would sing well while dancing. 'The bhava or the attitude of Sringara was for Bala the soul of bharata natya.' Musician-Artist S. Rajam said that Bala should be included in this book as she was a good musician too.

Here are some excerpts of some of her learned dissertations:

'Sringara stands supreme in the range of emotions. No other emotion is capable of reflecting the mystic union of the human with the divine.'

'The feet keeping to time, hands expressing gesture, the eye following the hands with expression, the ear listening to the dance master's music and the dancer's own singing - by harmonising these five elements, the mind achieves concentration and attains clarity in the richness of participation. The inner feeling of the dancer is the sixth sense which harnesses these five mental and physical elements to create the experience and enjoyment of Beauty. It is the spark which gives the dancer her sense of spiritual freedom. The spectator, who is absorbed in intently watching this, has his mind freed of distractions and feels a great sense of clarity. In their shared involvement, the dancer and the spectator are both released from the burden of worldly life and experience the divine joy of the Art with a sense of total freedom.'

There could not be a better classic elucidation. Ancestral artistic affluence, innate talents combined in Balasaraswati to command wide popularity, respect and image. Her orchestra included Jayammal and Lakshmiratnammal, besides

Choristers Narasimhalu Naidu and Gnanasundaram, Mridangam Ranganathan and Kuppuswami Mudaliar, Flute T. Viswanathan (now a Sangita Kalanidhi) and Clarinet Radhakrishna Naidu.

Concert Tours	:	Japan	1961
		USA	1962
		UK	1963
		Europe and USA	1965
She had conducted a Summer School in San Francisco; has choreographed Sarabhendra Bhupala Kuravangi; and was Director, School of Dance, Music Academy, Madras.			
Publication	:	Bharatanatyam	
Honours & Titles	:	Sangeet Natak Akademy Award	1955
		Padma Bhushan	1957
		Padma Vibhushan	
		Hony. Doctoral degree by Rabhindra Bharati University	1964
		Sangita Kalanidhi by Music Academy, Madras	1973
		Hony. Degree of Desikothama (D. Lit.) by Viswa Bharati, Shantiniketan	1978

The Oscar Award–holder the late lamented Bharat Ratna Satyajit Ray had brought out a documentary titled 'BALA', a rare tribute indeed.

'The rigour of the discipline of dance is annulled by the joy of its Beauty.'  
What an epigrammatist she was !

\* \* \*

## **K. BALASUBRAMANIAN - VIOLINIST:**

**(b. 1951)**

Apost–graduate in mathematics, Balasubramanian had his training in music with his father K.A. Kasi Bhagavatar and M.Chandrasekharan, the prominent violinist. He had taken part in several music competitions held by the Music Academy and the Krishna Gana Sabha, Madras and got awards. Accompanies senior artistes with competency and is a Staff Artiste with the All India Radio, Coimbatore.

Concert tour	:	U.S.A.
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## **MADURAI M. BALASUBRAMANIAM - VOCALIST:**

**(b. July 21, 1931)**

Place of birth	:	Dindigul (famous for its lock industry !)
Parents	:	L. Meenakshisundaram Iyer and Anandavalli Ammal.

General qualification & Occupation.	:	B.A., B.T. Teacher, P.S. High School (North), Madras – since retired.
Training in music	:	Nagaswara Vidwan Ramachandra Reddiar – five years. Dr. M. Balamurali Krishna – 20 years from 1963.
Debut	:	At Nagpur for Nagpur Fine Arts on February 24, 1968.
Title	:	Ganakaladhara from SDSB Samaj, Arani.

Has been giving performances for the All India Radio, Sabhas and Doordarshan (Pamalai and Isai Arangam programmes). Born in a family of musicians and musical discourses, Madurai Balasubramaniam has a special inclination for rare ragas and compositions and in his presentation of songs, he lays clear emphasis on the meaning of the sahitya, i.e. the sahitya bhava.

\* \* \*

### **TIRUVARUR S. BALASUBRAMANIAM - VOCALIST-VIOLINIST: (b. 1925)**

Born at Tiruvarur, sanctified by the birth of the Carnatic Trinity, in a musical family, S. Balasubramaniam had his initial training both in vocal and in violin under his father-violinist, S. Subba Ayyar. He had further intensive training under distinguished masters, viz.,

Madurai Brothers (Srinivasa Ayyangar and Srirangam Ayyangar)	for about 5 years,
Srirangam Ayyangar	- advanced studies,
Madurai Mani Ayyar	- special compositions and
Kumbakonam Rajamanickam Pillai	- on violin expertise.

Balasubramaniam has been giving vocal concerts on the All India Radio and elsewhere and has also served as Professor in Violin at the Kalakshetra during 1990-1992. He has been training many disciples.

\* \* \*

### **BASAVANNA - COMPOSER: (b. 1125. A.D.)**

Son of Madarasa and Madulambika and nephew of Baladeva, Prime Minister to King Vijjala of the Kalyani Chalukyas, Vrishabheshwara, as Basavanna was initially called, had his studies under Jathaveda Muni and grew up fast in wisdom and original thinking. Born in a brahmin family of some influence at Basavanabagewadi in Bijapur district, he chose to become a Koodalsangama devotee and promoted Veera Saiva cult with vigour. He too became a minister under Vijjala but left it to pursue his religious inclinations and propagate Bakthi and Achara. His compositions known as '*Basava Vachanas*' are couched in easy, facile language and enjoy in kannada the importance given to *Vemanna Vachana* in telugu and *Tirukkural* in tamil. His signature was '*Koodala Sangama Deva*' and he is also called as Bhakti Bhandari and Jagat jyothi.



The late Mallikarjun Mansur is reputed to have adapted *vachanas* for his classical music concerts and made them popular. His concerts would bring in at least one of them.

\* \* \*

### **BELLARY BROTHERS - VOCALISTS:**

**VENKATESH**

**(b. 1933)**

**SESHAGIRI**

**(b. 1935)**

Father Raghavendrachar hailed from a family of Pauranikas – discourses on ancient spiritual lore. Narasimhachar, the eldest son learnt music from his father and, in his turn, taught the youngsters Venkatesh and Seshagiri. Raghavendrachar was a musician with pedagogic talents and was Music Teacher, Queen Mary's College, Madras and was later President, Rayalaseema Music Examination Board.

Venkatesh and Seshagiri were fourteen and twelve when they made their debut and have been giving concerts on the All India Radio and at other places. They are noted for their innovative raga elaboration and traditional expertise. Seshagiri later joined the Bangalore University as Professor.

\* \* \*

### **BHARATHA - PATRIARCH OF INDIAN MUSIC:**

**(c. 400 B.C. - 200 A.D.)**

Indian Music and Dance have a hoary antiquity with an unending chain of musicologists and musicians drawing inspiration initially from *Sama Veda*. It is relevant to mention that there seems to have been another musicologist of eminence bearing the same name in ancient Tamil Nadu, which has had an equally ancient musical system from pre-historic times. When Indian music slowly came under the influence of the Persian from the eleventh century, Indian musical system came to be confined to South India. Though both the North and the South have still the same raga-oriented music, North has the Hindustani style and the South has the Carnatic style. ('Carnatic' is a word which means ancient or peninsular India.) Successive musicologists have not only codified prevailing theory and practice but have injected improvements, precision and clarity. Ravages of time and distance, successive invasions by unmusical hordes and wanton criminal destruction and looting of art, architecture, sculpture and sacred and irreplaceable works have gone on from the 11th to the 19th century resulting in the loss of precious treasures of ageless worth. In their anxiety to save sacred gifts from the marauding tribes, several works were secreted in the labyrinthine bosom of gardens, temples and maths and ultimately lost track of and lost. Fortunately India had developed the proud asset of oral

transmission of scriptures, etc., and the unique system had helped in preserving the extant works. This was aided by another, the unique system of gurukulavasa and the few surviving isolated manuscripts had been preserved by knowledgeable men.

*Bharata Sastra* (named after its author) or the *Natya Sastra* is the earliest such treasure that is available. Thirty-six chapters, six thousand couplets in sanskrit and a few passages in prose present matchless evidence of the highly developed art then. Chapters 28 to 33 are on music and the rest are on dance. 1648 slokas deal with music, tala, etc., as applied to drama. He has taken the plots for dramas from *Rig Veda*, music from *Sama Veda*, acting from *Yajur Veda* and aesthetics from *Atharva Veda*. It is evident that drama with music had flourished in the Vedic period. Bharata has arranged 22 shrutis on the basis of the five basic minutae tones terming them as '*jatis*' or '*adharas*' of the 22 shrutis. R. Rangaramanuja Ayyangar observes:

'Bharata was a fountain of knowledge, a rare genius who became a legendary figure with a hundred sons to propagate Natya Sastra. In the light of a popular belief that the work was a synthesis of several contributors, the author's name being only a mnemonic for Bhava, Raga and Tala...' Written 2500 years ago, it is the document of supreme educative value. The overall picture of music in Natya Sastra has apparently not much in common with Carnatic Music of the present day...It was left to Sarngadeva to resuscitate it after eighteen centuries.'

**Note:** Mention of the hundred sons should presumably mean only a hundred disciples since Indian scriptures extol good disciples as sons of the guru. It would seem that Bharata would not have challenged Dhritarashtra's title and eminence in the matter of the number of children!

R.S. Nagar pointedly brings to notice that *Natya Sastra* was not available to modern scholars until it was discovered by Fitz Edward Hall, an American Indologist in 1865 and thus saved the great work from oblivion. H.H. Wilson, unable to secure the *Natya Sastra*, deplored earlier that the work, so honoured and so frequently, had been lost for ever. That has been the bane of vandalism of man and time.

Some later writers have made reference to Adi Bharata or Vrddhabharata. Abhinavagupta is said to have discarded the idea of composite authorship stating that the whole work was the work of one and only author. S.K. Dey has, however, opined that the work was completed or recast at some later date in accordance with the views of Nandikeswara. M.R. Kavi had remarked that Bharata's work had undergone much variations and *Abhinavabharati* itself mentions that there were two recensions of the *Natya Sastra*. In view of the fact that it is the oldest known work of considerable repute and authority, it is possible that minor interpolations had crept in as in the case of many other works and compositions. But, as Prof. R. Sathyanarayana says,

' In view of the reference to Bharata reverentially as a Muni and as Bhagavan by such eminent authorities as Matanga, Sarngadeva, Simha Bhupala and Kallinadha, doubts about the integrity of the work do not appear to be valid. Literary evidence and unity in planning and presentation suggest only a single authorship'.

Bharata is known to tradition as *Sutrakara*.

\* \* \*

### **TIRUVIDAIMARUDUR BHAVANI - VOCALIST: (20th Century - I half.)**

Bhavani took to music at the late age of twenty-five but rose up to the top soon. High-pitched voice, fast-moving rendition, enormous capability for loading her rendition with birkas and 'akaram' marked her concerts and she would cover songs in different languages and revel in tillana. Her ringing voice was her *forte*. She is credited with introducing kannada javalis at concerts in India.

\* \* \*

### **PALLAVI BHIMACHAR - VOCALIST: (19th Century II Half)**

A contemporary of Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar, Pallavi Bhimachar was a disciple of Andananallur Subbier. His son and disciple Srinivasa Rao specialised in singing Dasar Padas and was famous for it. Soolamangalam Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar writes that Bhimachar excelled in his rendition of pallavis and that he was very popular. Bhimachar hailed from Tiruchirappalli district.

\* \* \*

### **P. BHUVANASWAMAYYA - VIOLINIST : (b.1918)**

Son of K.Y. Pillayya, a tabla vidwan, Bhuvanasswamayya had his training in music under Pudukottai Subramania Ayyar, Chintlapalli Venkata Rao and his son Ramachandra Rao. Illness at the age of sixteen forced him to take to violin. Had his training under the senior violinist R.R. Keshavamurthy and his first concert was at the Rama Mandira started by Bidaram Krishnappa at Mysore. Bhuvanasswamayya has provided accompaniment to distinguished vocalists like Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar and Alathur Brothers and the violinist maestro T. Chowdiah. He has been appearing on the All India Radio since his twenty-second year. Known for his rich, innovative play and pleasing sound, he has helped many good and great causes. He was always interested in keeping his receptive musical inclinations open to listen and assimilate the best in others.

Concert tours : Singapore and Malaysia.

\* \* \*

**T. BRINDA - VOCALIST & VAINIKA:****(b. November 5, 1912)**

Grand daughter of the legendary vainika, Dhanammal and daughter of Kamakshi Ammal, Brinda was bred in the evergreen nursery of vibrant classicism in Carnatic music. Imbued the Dhanam tradition of melody from Dhanammal herself and her daughters. She is the eloquent inheritor of its grace and charm. This view finds support from the fact that the institution 'Sampradaya' arranged for a six months' special training course at Madras on Dhanam Classical tradition to be handled by T. Brinda and T. Viswanathan, a scion of the same nursery. She had absorbed enough music at home to elaborate ragas when at the age of nine she entered on gurukulavasa under Kanchipuram Naina Pillai. Mukta, her younger sister accompanied. But 'actually Brinda learnt directly from the maestro and Mukta kept the sruti (harmonium)'. Mukta says:

Grandmother Dhanammal was none too pleased at our being sent to Naina Pillai as if no music was available at home. Further Dhanammal's music was like honeyfall, soft and sweet and she wanted our music to be soft and feminine. She disliked women indulging in swara fireworks and feared that it would happen if we learnt music under Pillai.

Brinda made her debut with Mukta as support at the Tyagaraja Festival, Kanchipuram which was celebrated annually by Naina Pillai. Though Mukta did not undergo the rigorous training, she had assimilated enough by constantly hearing the master and his ward (Brinda) and the Brinda-Mukta combine was a prominent duo for four decades, till Brinda's daughter and vocalist, Vegavauhini joined to sing with Brinda. Thus Brinda has over seventy years' solid credit as a performing artiste of merit. She enjoys a vast repertoire of kritis, padams and javalis and several claim to have studied under her though some of the claims might not conform to fact, it is said.

For exquisite rendition of padams, Brinda has a name and for the Music Academy, Madras, she brought out a publication of javalis in 1965 but she feels that several performing artistes do not adhere to the proper *paddhati*. Semman-gudi Dr. Srinivasa Ayyar states that when Ariyakudi Ramanuja Ayyangar and he heard Brinda once, the former said,

'When women sing padams, it is mellifluous ;  
See, how beautifully Brinda has handled them !'

Ayyar could not stop with the joy of hearing. At the suggestion of the Maharani of Travancore, he learnt in three days three javalis and three padams from Brinda! (Three is Ayyar's lucky number perhaps!) Here is another tribute from another veteran, R. Vedavalli who states that her guru Mudicondan Venkatarama Ayyar used to tell his disciples,

'See, how Brinda keeps her voice sweet inspite of advancing age.  
You should take a lesson from her.'

These tributes to Brinda's musical expertise and acumen find reflection in the titles and honours conferred on her.

Titles & Honours	:	Sangit Natak Akademy Award	— 1965
		Sangita Kalanidhi from Music Academy, Madras	—1977
		Sangita Sikhamani from Indian Fine Arts Society,	Madras
		Swaralaya Pushkaram by Pushkaram	1992
Posts held	:	Professor, Central College of Carnatic Music, Madras	1951-70
		Visiting Professor, University of Washington, Seattle,	USA — Two terms
		Visiting Professor, California University, U.S.A. -	
			Two months.

Brinda has given concerts in U.S.A. and she was not interested in giving discs. She has been training many in Veena also.

\* \* \* \* \*

### GRATITUDE!

The concert was on.

‘ I wonder why the vocalist exhibits his teeth so often ! ’

‘ Gratitude! Concert sponsored by a Tooth Brush company. ’

\* \* \*

### CAVEAT TOSCANINI

Rehearsal was on. The second violinist inadvertently grazed the string next to the one he intended to play. It was almost inaudible. But Toscanini, the conductor stopped the orchestra, pointed his baton at the culprit and cried out sharply —

‘ One string will be quite enough, if you please. ’

(Sruti suddham, apaswaram, sruti bhedam rarely escape the keen ear of stalwarts.)

\* \* \*

### FAULT LAY ELSEWHERE

American composer George Gershwin died. A sentimental admirer wrote an elegy and rendered the piece before Oscar Levant for his approbation. How was it given?

‘ I think it would have been better if you were dead and Gershwin had written the elegy ! ’.

\* \* \*

**R. CHANDRASEKHARIAH - VOCALIST:****(b. June 4, 1915)**

'Mysore Brothers' are prominent torch-bearers of Carnatic music and Chandrasekhariah is the eldest. Father B. Ramaiah was a vidwan; and mother, Vidushi Varalakshmi was his guru. She was a vainika and vocalist. In grateful memory of her, Chandrasekhariah and his brother founded in 1945 'Sri Varalakshmi Academies of Fine Arts', Mysore providing facilities for training in music. Born at Mysore he had training under Pallavi Ramalingayya also and has been giving numerous concerts as one of Mysore Brothers ever since he made his debut in 1929 at the Mysore Jain Hostel. Was giving concerts on the All India Radio during 1937 to 1965. An expert in pallavi singing, he had taught music through the Academies to thousands of pupils including foreigners. Prof. Visweswaran, his brother, is referred to at page 438 of 'A Garland'. Another brother is Dr. R. Sathyanarayana, a musicologist.

Chandrasekhariah is also a reputed composer of about three hundred kritis, tillanas, etc., in kannada, telugu and sanskrit besides the 'One hundred and eight Mahamarga Tala Pallavi'. He sang and demonstrated it himself at Madras, etc. Dr. Sampathkumaracharya describes him as one of the foremost of vageyakaras and musicians. His compositions are brought out in seven samputas, the first four having been released.

Chandrasekhariah was / is naturally connected with various organisations such as:

The Central Sangeet Natak Akademy  
State Sangeetha Natak Academy  
Government of Karnataka Advisory Board on Music, Drama & Dance  
Chairman, Music Vidwat Examinations.

**Titles and Honours :**

It is a hefty list, the eminent composer-artiste having graced many conferences, etc. More important among them are :

Natya Sastra Kovida	All India Natya Kala Conference	1957
Asthana Vidwan	Mysore State	1973
Gana Vidya Vachaspati	Brahma Tantra Parakala Maha Samsthanam	1974
Sangeetha Choodamani	Kanchana Vidwat Sabha	1974
Sangeetha Ratnakara	H.H. Sankaracharya, Sringeri	1974
Sangeetha Saraswati	Avani Sringeri Sankaracharya	1975
Sangeetha Sudhakara	Akhila Karnataka Musicians' Sanmana Samithi	1980
Gana Ratnakara	Sri Vasudevacharya Sangeetha Sammelana	1981
Sangeetha Kala Thilaka	State Academy Award	1982
Samvit Sangeetha Kalasekhara	H.H. Sankaracharya Kashi Dakshinamurti Peeta	1983
Sangeetha Kala Nidhi	Sangeetha Nrtya Parishat of Karnataka	1985
Kala Bhooshana	16th Conference of Tyagaraja Ganasabha, Bangalore.	1987
Award	Karnataka Nrtya Academy	1991-92

**Concert Tours:**

U.K., Europe. (Concerts and discourses on Indian Music and Culture.)

\* \* \*

**P.T. CHELLADURAI S.J. - MUSICOLOGIST****(b. August 16, 1935)**

Place of birth	:	Sivagangai
Parents	:	V. Ignatius & Thomai Ponnammal
Academic Qualifications	:	M.A., B.T. and D.Lit. from Diandra University (Italy)
Musical Training	:	Diploma in Indian Music, University of Madras (1969-71) Sangita Vidwan Diploma, Tamil Nadu Government Music College (1974-76)

Chelladurai is a disciple of Tiruppamburam S. Shanmughasundaram, Principal, Government Music Training Centre, Madras. A Catholic priest of the Society of Jesus, he made his debut at St. Bede's Auditorium, Madras on June 11, 1971 in the presence of Prof. P. Sambamurti. He is Assistant Professor of Musicology and Musical Pedagogy in the Tamil Nadu Government Music Training Centre, Madras since 1984. Earlier he was part-time Principal, Evening Music Course of the same institution during 1982-84 and Research Scholar in Music under the Tamil Nadu Government during 1983-84.

Chelladurai has authored two good and very useful books:

- i. Tennaga Isai Eyal for the benefit of teachers and students of music.
- ii. The Splendour of South Indian Music for the benefit of University students.

The first book has received a State Award.

He has the credit of bringing out three cassettes presenting Christian bhajans and keerthanas in 1980-81 all set in classical tunes. He conducts a Summer School of Carnatic Music since 1974.

\* \* \*

**CHELLAPILLAI IYENGAR - VOCALIST:****(b. 1915)**

Father	:	Mantri Sampathkumarachariar of Melukottai.
Musical training	:	Started his training with his father in his ninth year. Then from his fifteenth year, underwent training with the famous Namakkal Narasimha Ayyangar's disciple Ramaswami Ayyangar at Tanjore and then with Bidaram Krishnappa. Finally he took the Sangita Bhushanam diploma from the Annamalai University in 1934.

Chellapillai Iyengar was not only a good vocalist but was also a good teacher. Has been contributing articles on music. He popularised the singing of the Navavarna kritis during the Navarathiri at Mysore and the practice acquired permanence under instructions of the Maharajah. During 1942-75, the vocalist was working with the Akashvani as artiste. T.N. Seshagopalan is said to be his son-in-law.

\* \* \*

**N. CHENNAKESAVIAH - VOCALIST & MUSICOLOGIST: (Novr.7, 1895 – Feb'y.12, 1984)**

'His singing is ever reverberating in my ears. An able teacher in theory and practice of music', said Varadachariar, of N. Chennakesaviah, son and disciple of Natanahalli Kesaviah, a musician.

Chennakesaviah underwent training later with Mysore K.Vasudevacharya and made his debut in 1924. He was a school teacher but this profession only helped in shaping his destiny in music on firm lines. He had given concerts on the All India Radio and at important places in India. He was Samasthana Vidwan, Mysore during 1944-1957, when the Palace discontinued the system of patronage as a measure of economy. Chennakesaviah was Member of the All India Radio Audition Board, Board of Examiners and the Experts Committee of the Music Academy, Madras.

**Compositions & Publications:**

He has composed many songs and has published seventeen of them with notation. Has published many articles and books on Raga Alapana Paddhati and Tana Mattu Pallavi and on the compositions of Mysore Sadashiva Rao. He was a regular contributor to the *Journal of the Music Academy*, Madras.

**Titles & Honours:**

Mysore State Sangeetha Nataka Academy Award	1968
Mysore State Rajyotsava Award	1971

\* \* \*

**KARUR CHINNASWAMI AYYAR - VIOLIN MAESTRO: (c.1900/1966)**

Karur has inherited a distinguished musical legacy. The eminent composer Kavi Mathrubhutayya, author of the opera '*Parijathapaharana Nataka*' started a distinguished line of violinists. Chinnaswami Ayyar, a grandson on the maternal side inherited a musical legacy on his father's side too. Father Narasayya was a violin vidwan. Chinnaswami Ayyar learnt violin from his brother Chinna Devudu Ayyar of the Karur Quartette. A staunch sampradaya vidwan, he had accompanied top artistes. Two Sangita Kalanidhis ( his son and renowned violinist Papa Venkataramiah and Musiri Subramania Ayyar) were among his disciples.

The Music Academy, Madras conferred on him the title of 'Sangita Kalanidhi' in 1950. Sangeet Natak Akademy Award was conferred in 1966.



# D

**DAS SWAMIGAL @ MATADHIPATI: MRIDANGIST:**

**(c. 1845-1925)**

The play of Das Swamigal resembled the style of Narayanaswami Appa. Supremely independent and rough, he treated Man and Money alike - perhaps a virtue by itself. Prone to paraphernalia in harmony with his character, he would play with such subtlety and mischievous digressions and perplexing permutations that his accompaniment was taken to mean '*Caveat Musician*'. When he is not that usual self, his play was remarkably good. When he once accompanied Poochi Srinivasa Ayyangar, his play was deeply appreciated by Pandithurai Thevar of Ramnad and he was presented with a diamond ring.

\* \* \*

**DATTILA - MUSICOLOGIST:**

**(c. 200 B.C. - 200 A.D.)**

Dattila is said to be a diminutive of Devadatta. In his work '*Dattilam*', he mentions Narada, Kohala and Visakhila as his preceptors. (Dattila is named as a son of Bharata, it is said, in *Natya Sastra*.) The exact period of Dattila is not known. *Dattilam* has been translated into hindi by Kalinda published from Hathras. There is another titled *Dattilam* - A Compendium of Ancient Indian Music' by Emmie Te Nijenhuis of Netherlands. Mukund Lath has again brought out the work with full commentaries in 1978--Impex India, New Delhi. A small work in aphoristic form called *Ragasagaram* specifically deals with *Gandharva Vedasaram*, i.e., the area of ancient music called '*Gandharva*' a sacred form stated to be born of *Sama*. While *Natya Sastra* treats *Gandharva* as one of the forms, *Dattilam* is an independent treatise on it alone. An expert in the science of tala, Dattila is widely quoted. Prof. R. Satyanarayana states that *Dattilam* is only a condensation and that the original should have been very elaborate.

\* \* \*

**CHIKKA DEVARAJA WODEYAR - COMPOSER:**

**(1673-1704)**

A contemporary of King Shahaji of Tanjore, Devaraja Wodeyar of Mysore was a veena artiste. He brought out the tenets of Sri Vaishnava faith in his kannada saptapadi '*Gitagopala*' on the model of the ashtapadi '*Gita Govinda*' with 82 kannada songs and one in telugu. *Kamboji* was his favourite raga with 27 songs. He was hailed as '*Aparimita*' and as '*Navakoti Narayana*'.

\* \* \*

## DHANAKOTI SISTERS : DHANAKOTI AMMAL KAMAKSHI AMMAL

They belonged to Syama Sastri disciple-line. Kamakshi Ammal was Kanchipuram Naina Pillai's mother and T. Mukta's guru in a way. The sisters had powerful resonant voice and their concerts were gripping and popular. Puducheri Rangaswami Ayyar gave them advanced training in the intricacies and nuances of rendition at concerts. They were adepts in pallavi rendition - a rare feat for musicians of the fair sex. They enjoyed an immense repertoire.

\* \* \*

### B. DEVENDRAPPAH - VOCALIST & JALATARANGAM ARTISTE:

(b. June 3, 1899)

Place of birth	:	Nyamathi in Karnataka
Parents	:	B.S. Ramaiah & Thulasamma
Musical training under :		B.S. Ramaiah, Bidaram Krishnappa, Seshanna, Subbanna & T. Narayana Iyengar – a galaxy of eminent vocalists and vainikas.
Posts held :	:	Chairman, Standing Committee, Mysore Sangeet Natak Academy. Member, Board of Studies in Music, Mysore University , Court Musician, Mysore.
Publications	:	Purandaradasa Kirti Darpana Kanakadasa Kirtana Sudambhudi.
Concert tour	:	China
Honours	:	Sangeet Natak Akademy Award.
Publications	:	Songs of Purandaradasa and Kanakadasa.

A noted vocalist and a prominent jalatarangam artiste of Karnataka, Devendrappa was versatile with violin, sitar, dilruba and tabla.

\* \* \*

### M.R. DORAISWAMY - FLAUTIST:

(b. April 25, 1922)

Born at Chickmagalur, of Ramachandra Ayyar, Doraiswamy enhanced his musical instincts by constant exposure to classical music in gramophone records and later with training under Narasinga Rao, before joining the Central College of Carnatic Music, Madras in 1938. He got his diploma with rank. Made his debut in 1938 itself. Has been giving a large number of concerts. In 1962, he joined the Ayyanar College, Bangalore as music teacher and became its Vice-Principal. Doraiswamy's expert knowledge and technical perfection helped in his concerts being satisfying and crisp with sruti and laya alignment.

**Concert Tour :** U.S.S.R.

**SALEM DORESWAMI AYYANGAR - VOCALIST: (July 1890 - Dec.20, 1952)**

Salem Doreswami Ayyangar was the favourite disciple of Ramnad (Poochi) Srinivasa Ayyangar. When Mysore Vasudevacharya visited the home of the guru, Doreswami Ayyangar was sitting by the side of his guru tuning the tamboora, the other disciples listening to the guru singing the *Begada* varnam '*Marachitlundedi Meragadura*'. When the guru turned to his prime disciple, the latter went in and brought a heapful of idlies and a pot of ghee. The guru was a glutton both in food and in music. Vasudevacharya was surprised to see Srinivasa Ayyangar gulping down twenty-five idlies fully drenched and soaked in ghee and a potful of coffee to be followed up by pupils! Once at midnight Doreswami was missing from his room and after intensive search, the guru found him near a pond practising at that nocturnal hour full-throated his song in raga *Purvikalyani* '*Paramapavana Rama*'. A shiver went down his spine as he had reprimanded Doreswami earlier that day for not practising the kirtana satisfactorily. When he touched Dore, he was not even conscious of the touch, immersed as he was in his *Purvikalyani* in that calm and serene atmosphere when solemn stillness ruled. Doreswami opened his eyes only when water was sprinkled on his face. The guru hugged him fondly and from that day, he made Doreswami take his bed by his side! Poochi was fond of his disciples doing gurukulavasa.

Parents	:	Gopala Ayyangar and Seshammal (Patnam Srinivasa Ayyangar, his grandfather was an educationist.)
Was born at	:	Abhinavam in Salem district.

Leaving his home at the age of nine, he had a brief training under Sarabha Sastri. As his health was then failing Sarabha recommended him to Poochi Srinivasa Ayyangar when he had completed the *Ata tala Kalyani* varnam.

Doreswami Ayyangar covered the distance from Kumbakonam to Ramanathapuram on foot and Poochi Srinivasa Ayyangar was glad to take him as a disciple. Bhaskara Sethupati of Ramnad sanctioned a monthly stipend of Rs.fifty for the purpose. From 1901 to 1919, Doreswami Ayyangar had, perhaps, the longest tenure of gurukulavasa, doing the domestic chores for his guru and following him to his concerts too. In 1921 on the Vijaya Dasami day, he made his debut before Bhaskara Sethupati with top accompanists Tirukkodikaval Krishna Ayyar on violin, Azhaganambi Pillai on mridangam and Mamundia Pillai on kanjira. He shifted to Madras and then to Salem. Was giving quite a large number of concerts. Krishnarajendra Wodeyar was captivated by his rendition and offered him the post of asthana vidwan which Ayyangar did not accept. He was hailed as an 'Uthama Gayaka'.

In 1926, Sri Purandaradasa Mahotsava Sabha, Coimbatore conferred on him the title of 'Gana Sikhamani', when he gave a delectable concert with Mysore

Chowdiah and Palghat Mani as accompanists. He was on the Experts Committee of the Music Academy, Madras and his views were appreciated.

Among his disciples, his son Salem Chellam Ayyangar is now a performing vidwan and is in the Kalakshetra College of Fine Arts, Madras.

Disc recordings.

\* \* \* \* \*

### ENGLISH NOTES

In the early part of this century, there was a craze for english notes. Palladam Sanjeeva Rao handled them quite often as flute was eminently suited for english notes. Madurai Mani-Ayyar's style of rendition of english notes had a special aesthetic quality and so he consistently included them in his concerts.

\* \* \*

### MELODY IS FEMININE !

‘ God is partial to woman in giving them a lovely voice.’

— T. Sankaran.

‘ Even braying should be done by female asses, not by the male.’

— Tirumalai Naidu.

\* \* \*

### DILUTING THE SOUL IN MELODY

Gottuvadyam Narayana Ayyangar died while singing the song ‘ *Mokshamu Galada* ’ at the All India Radio, Bangalore.

Veena C. Krishnamurthy died while he was teaching.

Flautist P. Sabhesan died while performing at the Tyagaraja Aradhana at Pune. He hailed from Kumbakonam.

Many such souls had diluted their earthly coils in melody.

\* \* \*

# E

## SISTERS (LAKSHMI NARAYANI & RANGIAMMAL): VOCALISTS: (20th century)

Enadi Sisters and Dhanakoti Sisters monopolised concerts by woman-duos in 20th century. Disciples of Patnam Subramania Ayyar, Enadi Sisters composed and sang in perfect unison. Were speed merchants noted for their late sweet voice and enchanting rendition. Eminent vidwans had praise for music and T.Sankaran writes:

'When they sang, *Ninnujuchi dhanyudaiti* in madhyamakala, Tirukkodikaval Krishna Ayyar and Poochi Srinivasa Ayyangar were charmed. Ayyar admitted, "When we sing the piece, it becomes a drag. But look how perfectly these ladies have handled it". The sisters were however misers in hoarding their fabulous repertoire. They would put their tambura away the moment they heard of visitors. But their madhyamakala singing was so spotless that my mother Lakshmiratnammal tried very hard to learn a few from them. They did begin to teach her a song in *Behag*. After two lines the lesson ceased with "Come, next Sunday". But that Sunday never came. They died penniless.'

Narayan 'also says that the Enadi Sisters were 'notorious for keeping lives and their music away from rasikas'. Of course, one could have no objection to their keeping 'themselves' away from rasikas. It was unfortunate tragedy that while their repertoire was fabulous and their music was so good that they should have died penniless! Evidently they had deprived themselves of well-wishers and sane advice being of possessive nature.

\* \* \* \* \*

## THE BASIC REASON

Musicians conversant with the more complex tonal structures and form of Carnatic music digest the less complex tonal structure of Hindustani music. That is why that eminent Carnatic musicians have achieved eminence as performers in Hindustani music. No Hindustani musician has emerged as Carnatic musician of any worth... It speaks for the openness of mind and sense of curiosity of the Carnatic music tradition. Thus Swami Dikshitar not only seriously learnt Hindustani music but also composed Hindustani ragas... Presentation of these in routine Carnatic style and Carnaticisation of Hindustani ragas of their beauty... Greater incidence of gamakas is the basic hurdle... Hindustani system is by and large pitch-oriented, while Carnatic music is raga-bhava oriented.

— Prof. R. Visveswaran - *Sruti*.

### SOURCES OF INSPIRATION : THE BHISHMA\* SPEAKS

- a. Gottuvadyam Sakharana Rao and Veena Dhanammal did not take mridangam and yet shone as collossuses.
- b. Madurai Subramania Ayyar sang swaras to the phrase *rupamu pratapamu (Ninnuvina Sukhamuganu - Todi)* with hundreds of *poruthams*. I cannot forget them. He did not think of swaras as he sang.
- c. Tiruvisanallur Narayanaswami sang a lot of swaras (and not too many kritis) that made hearts throb with joy.
- d. Govindaswami Pillai rained *sarvalaghu* swaras.
- e. Naina Pillai sang kritis so perfectly that one would never feel satiated with hearing them.
- f. Konerirajapuram Vaidyanatha Ayyar would give form to the raga before embellishing it with astonishing brikas.
- g. Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar sang with feeling. None can match his speed in brikas, not even violin. There were no straight ascents and descents but coils within coils.
- h. Raga alapanas increased in scope and duration after the arrival of G.N. Balasubramaniam.
- i. Pushpavanam and Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar began singing Hindustani songs at their concerts. Of course, Muthuswami Dikshitar was the earliest to undergo training in it and compose many songs availing of the good shades in Hindustani ragas.
- j. Tiger Varadachariar's music was soaked in life.
- k. Musiri Subramania Ayyar's singing had great depth. It was *bhava sangita*. I have seen people sobbing during his concerts when he sang *Tiruvadi Charanam*. His voice had the unique quality of being clear.
- l. In the songs of Papanasam Sivan, music and meaning marvellously blended and are melted perfectly.

As Nedunuri Krishnamurti referred to, the good features and styles of maestros may be kept in view and imbibed by apprentices.

\*(Bhishma refers to Dr. Semmangudi Srinivasa Ayyar.)

# G

## MUKKAI GANAPATI BHAGAVATAR - VOCALIST:

(20th Century Beginning)

Ganapathy Bhagavatar was born at Mukkai near Palghat - a meeting place of three rivers of which one is the invisible i.e. Antarvauhini like the celebrated Saraswati at Prayag and at Mukkudal near Kanchipuram. A prominent vidwan, he was very popular in the area.

\* \* \*

## SRI GANAPATHI SACCHIDANANDA SWAMIGAL- COMPOSER-MUSICIAN:

(b. May 26, 1942)

Place of birth	:	Mekedatu village in Kanakapura district, Karnataka.
Parents	:	Veda Brahma Narasimha Sastri & Jayalakshmi Mata.

His Holiness Sri Ganapathi Sacchidananda Swamigal, the Founder- President of Sri Ganapathi Sacchidananda Avadootha Peetham, Mysore is a siddha purusha with spiritual attainments. Swamigal is a tireless crusader for spiritual revival inculcating spiritual values, humanism, equanimity of mind and relief of suffering in particular. He has set afoot many social projects and musical therapy is one among them.

The Swamiji started his life in the Postal Department in a village near Nanjangud town and was of a spiritual bent of mind since childhood. A net-work of 160 ashrams in the East and the West and an impressive centre at Mysore with a studio to aid, spread the message and teachings of the Swamiji now.

Swamigal had no formal training in music but took to veena, sitar and some other instruments. Music is a hereditary virtue, an asset inherited from the ancestor Vedamurthi Jalappa Sastri who was an ashtavadhani and a master musician. Mastery of sanskrit lore in the family gave sustenance to the musical heritage. A study of the lives of great musicians and composers of the past clearly reveals that music and sanskrit were inseparable twins and that one aided the progress and prosperity of the other. Swamigal has taken to mass healing being a yogi with music as his instrument. He has been touring round the world conducting and propagating spiritual music to achieve the twin objectives of meditation and healing. Music has always been treated as the fourth 'Upaveda', the other three being *Dhanurveda*, *Ayurveda* and *Artha Sastra*. Says the Swamiji:

'I use devotional music as a means of spiritual energy transmission. Some Higher Force takes care of my process once I decide to heal through music. There is pure energy in melody with pure notes (swara suddhi). Spiritual power and brilliance help me. I composed thousands of kirtans in many languages. Indian music is soulful. Ragas originate from Nature. I do not claim I heal. Lord heals. I am only His instrument.'

### **Concerts abroad :**

Musical Healing concerts were given at Zurich, Munich, Dusseldorf (West Germany), Luisiana, Slippery Rock (USA), Hoois Beaufort, Antwerp and Hague in Europe.

Swamiji has given such concerts at Madras, Hyderabad and other cities also.

### **Compositions & Books:**

Guru Gita, Bhajan Yogamu, Bhajan Kaveri, Bhajan Mala and quite a number of other books.

### **Disc recordings :**

Bhajans, Concerts and other items in compact discs, cassettes and video cassettes.

### **Honours & Titles:**

Some are-

- i. Member, Metropolitan City Council of Baton Rouge, USA
- ii. 'State of Louisiana' Approbation.

Swamiji uses an electronic Rolland synthesiser for presenting vibrant sounds interspersed with shades of jazz. His concert provides an enthralling, but relaxed soothing melody conferring mental peace to the listeners.

\* \* \*

### **P.V. GANESA AYYAR - VOCALIST:**

**(b.(c.) 1921)**

Pozhakudi Ganesa Ayyar enjoys an immense repertoire of songs and has been coaching a large tribe of talented students in classical music. A Sangita Bhushanam, he has been honoured with the titles of Pavaimani, Tharangamani and Swara Sahitya Mani. During his studies for taking the diploma Sangita Bhushanam at the Annamalai University, renowned musicians like Tiger Varadachariar, Sabhesa Ayyar and Ponniah Pillai were his teachers.

\* \* \*



**ANAYAMPATTI S. GANESAN - JALATARANGAM ARTISTE:****(b. May 22, 1932)**

While writing on Jalatarangam Subba Ayyar, it was mentioned in Book I that Anayampatti is to jalatarangam what Melattur is to bhagavatha mela or Palghat to mridangam. Anayampatti S. Ganesan comes in a distinguished line of artistes. Son of Subba Ayyar, he was born at Anayampatti. He had apprenticeship in –

Vocal music under	:	his father, A.V. Narayana Ayyar, uncle and violin vidwan and Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar.
Violin under	:	Anayampatti S. Dandapani and Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar.
Jalatarangam	:	'Swayam Krishi' - Ancestral legacy, self motivation and practice.

Bidding goodbye to general education with higher elementary school, he made his debut at the age of fourteen during the Thai Poosam Festival as vocalist, in his twentieth year as violinist and as a jalatarangam artiste in his fifty-second year at Anayampatti itself. Ganesan is attached to the All India Radio, Pondicherry since 1975.

Concert tour	:	Provided violin support to his brother and guru, late S.Dandapani in France(1982).
Publication	:	'Isai Tamil' with notation (Lyrics by Nadathur Nambi of All India Radio, Pondicherry.)
Cassette	:	One
Titles	:	Ganakala Bhushana from Pondicherry admirers. Isai Kadal by Karaikudi Tamil Isai Sangham. Taranga Vadya Dhureena from Karnataka.

A highly difficult art with limited public patronage, Ganesan is upholding a traditional family heritage in Jalatarangam.

\* \* \*

**GAYATRI CHANDRASEKAR - VOCALIST:****(b. June 28, 1948)**

Daughter of Dr. S. Krishnamurthy and Rukmani, Gayatri was born at Mysore. Her grandfather Sankaranarayana Iyer was a well-known composer and musicologist. A Bachelor of Science with a Diploma in Advertising, Gayatri had her musical training under Kallidaikurichi M.Ramalinga Bhagavatar (brother of Vedanta Bhagavatar), Nellai Mani, a violinist and Tirunelveli Meenakshisundara

Bhagavatar. She was associated with the prominent magazine on Music and Dance '*Sruti*' during 1983- 1988 and is now News Correspondent, Doordarshan, Bangalore. Made her debut in 1957 at the Tyagaraja Utsavam, Tirunelveli and has been giving concerts on the All India Radio and elsewhere.

\* \* \*

### GIRIRAJA KAVI - COMPOSER & VOCALIST:

(17th century)

Giriraja Kavi was the illustrious composer of sringara padas and excellent yakshagana plays in honour of his patrons Raja Shahaji II (1684-1712) and Raja Sambhaji I (1712 - 1728) of Tanjore. His telugu compositions numbering about two hundred are preserved in the Saraswati Mahal Library, Tanjore.

After scrutinising the family pedigrees given by Giriraja Kavi's brother Kavigiri alias Venkatagiri in his '*Rukmangada Charitra*' and '*Abhinayadarpana*' and the Wallajahpet manuscripts, Dr. S. Seetha states that **Giriraja Kavi was different from Giriraja Brahman**, grandfather of Tyagarajah and author of yakshaganas and kirtanas who adorned the Court of Tulajah (1763 -1789) and that it is difficult to ascribe some songs to either one of the individual composers.

Apart from the confusion in the identification of the paternal grandfather of Tyagarajah, there was probably confusion in respect of his maternal grandfather, *Vina* Kalahastayya also. He is different from *Vina* Kalahastayya who was honoured in 1771 by Raja Tulajah.

Giriraja Kavi had invented new ragas like —

Sarabharaja Chandrika  
 Sarabha Lalita  
 Sarabha Kalpam  
 Sarabha Nalina and  
 Suranidhi, 'the melodic individuality of which is not known'.

His musical plays in telugu are —

Sarvanga Sundari Vilasam	Rajamohana Kuravanji
Rajakanya Parinayam	Vadajayamu and
Lilavati Kalyanam.	

These are stated to be in manuscript still. Soma Kavi, Vasudeva Kavi, Rama Bharati and Pattabhiramayya were among his contemporaries in the Court of Shahaji.

(Note: The description given at page 64 of '*A Garland*' stands modified.)

\* \* \*

**Prof. GOMATI VISHWANATHAN - VOCALIST & MUSICOLOGIST: (b.1922)**

Prof. Gomati Vishwanathan inherited much from her musically talented mother, a violinist and disciple of Tirukkodikaval Krishna Ayyar, her grandmother, aunt and grandaunt. Initiated at the age of seven by her mother, she had specialised training with –

Mannargudi Swaminatha Ayyar  
 Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar  
 Mudicondan Venkatarama Ayyar and  
 T.K. Jayarama Ayyar

— all celebrities.

The benevolent Justice T.L. Venkatarama Ayyar gave her insight into Muthuswami Dikshitar's kritis. On the academic side, she got her M.Lit. in music from the Madras University on her thesis 'The Music of the Nritya – Natakas of South India', having made an in-depth study of the diverse types of dance –dramas.

Gomati Vishwanathan has been giving concerts for nearly five decades on the All India Radio, Doordarshan and for prestigious institutions. Has a vast and unique repertoire of the compositions of practically all eminent great classical composers in telugu, sanskrit, tamil, etc. She is a traditionalist. A musicologist of vast erudition, varied specialisation and dedication, she is in constant demand for lecture-demonstrations, guidance in research and expert opinion. Sangeet Natak Academy, Central Institute of Education, All India Radio, Music Academy and Universities have requisitioned her services and her lecture - demonstrations cover as varied subjects as 'Isai Tamizh' and 'Unpublished kritis of Merattur Venkatarama Sastry' and 'Historical Evolution of Karnatak Music' and 'Temple Music'.

Has authored numerous articles. Was associated with the committees on music of the Delhi University, AIR Audition Committee. Was Adviser to the University Grants Commission, Sangit Natak Academy and Central Board of Secondary Education, etc. She is on the Experts Committee of the Madras Music Academy.

Prof. Gomati Vishwanathan was Reader-Head of the Karnatak Music Department of the Faculty of Music and Fine Arts, Delhi University and is now Visiting Professor, Queen Mary's College, Madras and Madras University.

\* \* \*

**KUMBAKONAM GOPALA AYYAR - VOCALIST: (c. 1910)**

Gopala Ayyar had all the plus points - a melodious voice, flawless expertise and fine rendition but lacked luck. He had to toil as an

ordinary accountant in a brass vessel shop and supplement the income by acting as voice support to harikatha artistes.

Lacklustre life did not, however, prevent Gopala Ayyar from entertaining a fond desire to sing with Tirukodikaval Krishna Ayyar, a colossus, on violin. The absurdity of entertaining such a desire deterred neither him from expressing it to his friend and patron Balakrishna Udayar nor the latter from sympathising with him. Udayar brought Krishna Ayyar for 'a concert' without revealing the name of the vocalist to the last. To his consternation and dismay, the celebrated all-time maestro Krishna Ayyar saw Gopala taking his seat at the centre of the concert stage rather than behind some other vocalist to lend voice-support. Overcoming his aversion and anger, he played with a fallen heart. He was surprised to find Gopala singing very well and finally recommended a fair fee for him too. If Viswamitra extracted acknowledgement from the mouth of Vasishta that he was a Brahma Rishi, Gopala too had his day of glory to have the maestro as his violin accompaniment and secure his nod in appreciation. (ELLARVI)

\* \* \*

### **LALGUDI V.R. GOPALA AYYAR - VIOLINIST: (1900 - 1979)**

There is an amorous marriage of the Lalgudi family with violin. Lalgudi Radhakrishna Ayyar, a prominent violinist of his days, trained his two sons, Madurai Kandaswami Bhagavatar and V.R. Gopala Ayyar as violinists. It is well known that the tradition is kept up with added flavour by Gopala Ayyar's children and grand children who have made the word 'Lalgudi' a family attribute denoting charm and exuberant violin play. Gopala Ayyar was a competent violinist whose rendition cascaded fast. He was a composer of elegance. Lalgudi Jayaraman reminisces that he owes his all to his eminent father and regrets that his father's retiring disposition and lack of opportunities robbed him of the recognition that was his due.

\* \* \*

### **GOPALARATNAM - VOCALIST: (20th Century)**

The family of Gopalaratnam hailed from Srirangam but she was born at Pushpagiri near Vijayanagar and had her tutelage with Vainika Joga Rao. Later she took a diploma in 1956 in music. A very good artiste with a melodious voice and talents, Gopalaratnam has been giving concerts on the All India Radio and at important institutions like the Music Academy, Madras and Ram Mandira, Mysore. She was singing for the Bhakti Ranjani programmes of the All India Radio. A multi-faceted artiste, she is well-versed in the exposition of yak-shagana, kuchipudi, Melattur Mela, folk music, javali, etc., items.

Title : Madhura Gayak

\* \* \*

**TIRUVIZHIMALALAI BROTHERS - NAGASWARAM DUO :****S. GOVINDARAJA PILLAI****(b. Nov. 7, 1919****S. DAKSHINAMURTHI PILLAI****August 9, 1923)**

Born at Tiruvizhimalalai, of Subramania Pillai and Sethu Ammal, both were initially trained for vocal music by their paternal uncle and later had training in nagaswaram under their father and uncle Natarajasundaram. Are prominent artistes and popular. Were asthana vidwans of Dharmapuram and Tiruvaduthurai Mutts and have given a large number of recitals on the All India Radio and elsewhere. Tiruvizhimalalai has a beautiful temple and the nagaswara artistes are usually accredited to it. *Vide* pages 191-2 of *A Garland* for details on Tiruvizhimalalai Brothers (Sr.)

**Titles & Honours :**

Nagaswara Rathnam .

Kalaimamani from Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram in 1979.

**Concert tour :**

Sri Lanka.

\* \* \*

**T.K. GOVINDA RAO - VOCALIST & PEDAGOGUE :****(b. April 21, 1929)**

Born at Tirupoonthura in Kerala, of Kamalam and Krishna Rao, a musician, Govinda Rao had his first lessons in music under his cousin, Mani Bhagavatar. He was in the first batch of students at the Central College of Music, Madras, then under Principal Musiri Subramania Ayyar. Simultaneously Rao was taking lessons from Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar thus deriving the benefit of the scholarship and musical eminence of two sangita kalanidhis of different styles. Rao is a staunch upholder of kalapramana backed by tonal felicity and his concerts are satisfying.

After his training, Govinda Rao has been giving concerts extensively in India and abroad. He was Lecturer for sometime at the Central College of Carnatic Music, Madras and later became Producer, All India Radio, Madras. He was shifted to Delhi and retired in January, 1990 as Chief Producer. He has set to tune slokas also.

**Books & Publications :**

Varnamanjari comprising 27 varnas

Kshetra Kirtanas of Tyagaraja on Tirupati, Kanchipuram and Tiruvaiyaru fully notated along with S. Rajam.

**Disc recordings :****Concert tours abroad :**

USA, Canada, Singapore, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Mangolia.

Govinda Rao is an admirer of the ancient system of gurukulavasa which instils emotional integration between the teacher and the taught and provides immense scope for creativeness, the bedrock of Indian music. Here is an anecdote cited by Rao :

'A boy was sent to Muthuswami Dikshitar for training in music. Several months later, the father was pained to hear that lessons had not been started for his son and so to ascertain the position, he made a visit to Dikshitar. When he politely enquired the Bard of Tiruvarur, that intellectual Kshetragna summoned the boy and asked him to sing! The perplexed boy started with diffidence and ended with a fine rendition to the amazement of the father and satisfaction of his guru!'

Govinda Rao states that it was gurukulavasa in essence, knowledge acquired and assimilated by hearing, by becoming one with the guru and realising in himself a second version of his guru quite in accord with the Adwaita philosophy. (This anecdote finds support in the case of Mysore Vasudevacharya, who has penned that Patnam Subramanya Ayyar rarely taught him but that he accompanied him to all his concerts seeking clarification only on his doubts.) Rao further points out that Carnatic music is kriti-oriented providing sahitya bhava and rasa in addition to drawing out the various possibilities and potential of raga bhava. The great vaggeyakaras have practically covered all the possibilities for elaboration and creativity, which is the bedrock of Indian music. He mentions that Annamalai University in earlier decades provided a quasi gurukulavasa as the gurus and pupils lived together affording enough scope for mutual exchanges outside the classrooms too.

**Honours & Titles :**

Sangita Sastra Ratnakara by Sri Mouna Swamigal, Madras	1968.
Gana Kala Tilakam by Sri Rama Seva Mandali, Malleswaram	1972.
Gana Nadakanal by Nadakanal, Madras	1985.
Sangita Choodamani by Sri Krishna Gana Sabha, Madras	1988.

\* \* \*

**V. GOVINDASWAMI NAICKER - VIOLINIST:**

(b. Sept. 24, 1915)

Born at	Cuddalore
of	Venu Naicker and Anandammal.
Learnt Violin under	Rathinaswami Pillai and Villivakkam Narasimhachariar.

**The artiste has thus demonstrated his knowledge and his individuality!**

## ARIYAKUDI'S SEVEN

Ariyakudi Ramanuja Ayyangar, doyen of Carnatic vocalists for three decades –

- |  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| i. Always carried a sheet of paper and a pencil tucked in at his waist to jot down ideas and points; | – Secretarial ;        |
| ii. Was meticulous in writing up his daily accounts;   | – Accounts and Audit;  |
| iii. Was parsimonious to a degree when his purse was involved;                                       | – Financial Control ;  |
| iv. Was never parsimonious in conversation or encouraging others;                                    | – Public Relations;    |
| v. Very strict in keeping up appointments;   | – Administration       |
| vi. Always took good advice wheresoever it came from   | – Receptivity; and     |
| vii. Was well known for 'pinching'. Once he got a gun from an admirer but never shot any.            | – One of the 64 Arts ? |

— Source: S. Rajam in '*Sruti*'.

(Note: A word about the village of Ariyakudi. Once an *asukavi* visited the village. None cared for him. He became angry and so started singing *ex tempore* a song which would bring eternal perdition to the villagers. Frightened at his *Durvasa* type of rage, villagers prayed to be pardoned. The *asukavi* modified his song already begun to the effect that the village shall remain where it was. It did not prosper much until recently.)

\* \* \*

## PAY IN SAME COIN

In Mylapore Nadu Street, where Balachander-Rajam Brothers prospered in their teens, Kanchipuram Naina Pillai gave a concert. Mridangam Ramdas and Trichy Panchami on *kanjira* played softly in deference to the vocal maestro. The audience began to deride the percussionists. An annoyed Naina Pillai stopped singing and asked the two accompanists, 'A short *tani* (percussion solo). Come on, show your merit'. The two percussionists were accomplished artistes.

There ensued a breezy play in rhythm and dazzling fingering. The crowd clapped repeatedly. Pillai, before resuming, said:

**'They laughed at you before. Now you laugh at them.'**

— T. Sankaran.

\* \* \*



# H

## P. HARIHARA AYYAR - VEENA ARTISTE :

(b. December 10, 1932)

Place of birth :	Trivandrum
Parents :	Trivandrum Veena Parameswara Bhagavatar & Seethalakshmi Ammal
Musical Heritage :	Suchindram Veena Padmanabha Bhagavatar, grandfather. Father an illustrious veena vidwan - W. Somerset Maugham listened to him and recorded, 'Wonderful and beautiful experience . . . lovely melodies . . . A great musician.' Great grandfather Sthanu Bhagavatar & granduncle Sankaranarayana were good musicians. Brother & Guru, P. Padmanabhan, M.Sc., a vocalist & vainika.

## Musical Training

Born in a musical family, training started at the age of seven and continued under grandfather till 1949, father till 1965 and later with brother P. Padmanabhan. Harihara Ayyar had thus a qualified gurukulavasa. Veena rendition has been a family virtue.

Academic Qualification & Occupation :	A Maths Graduate & now an employee in the Life Insurance Corporation. A.I.R. artiste since 1958
Debut :	December 1948 at V.J.T. Hall, Trivandrum for Y.M.C.A.

Harihara Ayyar has been giving concerts on the All India Radio, sabhas, etc. An expert in the design and construction of veena, the vidwan has been carrying on the style and message of his distinguished ancestors with a keen eye on the purity of rendition.

He recalls the incident in about 1885 in which Suchindram Padmanabha Bhagavatar was asked to play for five minutes before Sri Rama Ayyangar, Dewan of Travancore as the latter had to attend some functions urgently. Amazed at the time given, the vainika started setting the tune simultaneously. Rama Ayyangar forgot his functions and sat for two hours and then said :

' Dear Bhagavatar, you had tied me to your *Kalyani* alapana and made me forget the other kalyanams (marriage functions). Your *Kalyani* is worth more than all the other nine ! '

August 1966. Harihara Ayyar's concert was on. A 'rasika' requested him for 'RTA' i.e. ragam, tanam and anupallavi – not the usual 'RTP'. Ayyar obliged him with raga and tanam in *Kamboji* followed by neraval and swaras beginning at the anupallavi of the kritis '*Ma Janaki*'. The rasika felt pleased. Ayyar recalls an incident when his father started playing '*Koniyadedu*' in *Kokiladhwani*. When a gentleman requested for raga *Mayuradhwani*, others in the audience shouted him down stating that cuckoo should prevail over the peacock in music.

\* \* \*

### HARIPALA - MUSICOLOGIST :

(c. 1170 A.D.)

Son of Samantasimha (also called Bhima Deva) Haripala was the ruler of Gujarat with his capital at Abhinavapura (Anhilawad) belonging to the Chalukyas. He bore the title of 'Vichara Chaturmukha' and has authored the work '*Sangita Sudhakara*' in five sections dealing with angabhinaya, tala, musical instruments, requisites of natya, gita and gita prabhandas. His work is one of the main links in the chain of works on music.

'Its importance lies in its support of Nandikeswara and his system. As the work is earlier to *Sangita Ratnakara*, it helps us to trace the evolution of music and dance.'

— Gowri Kuppaswami & M. Hariharan

\* \* \*

### HEMALATHA MANI - VAINIKA :

(b. April 11, 1953)

Daughter of K. Narayanaswamy, Hemalatha Mani is a graduate in Arts and Law. She underwent training under C. Chitti Babu, the veena maestro and also took the Sangita Vidwan diploma at the Govt. Music College, Madras in 1975. With scholarship from Government, she continued her specialised training with Chitti Babu in Veena. Made her debut at the Tyagaraja Aradhana, Tiruvaiyaru in 1968. Has been giving concerts at various forums.

Title	:	Paintamizh Isai Pannbu Mani by Saraswati Sangeetha Sabha, Cuddalore
Concert tours	:	Hongkong, Bangkok and Baltimore (USA)

Hemalatha Mani is a composer too. Her recitals are satisfying.

\* \* \*

### C. HONNAPPA BHAGAVATAR - MUSICIAN & FILM STAR : (Jany 14, 1915 – Octr 1, 1992 )

Place of birth	:	Choudasandra Village, Bangalore district.
Parents	:	Chicka Lingappa (Gamaki) – Kallamma.

As a boy, Honnappa Bhagavatar took part in yakshagana, bhajans and dramas and learnt harmonium and tabla play. He had training under Sambandamurthy Bhagavatar, Mysore Arunachalappa, etc., and shaped into a classical musician. Actually he was giving concerts. But his own interests and future lay in films and dramas and so entered Sri Gubbi Veeranna's famous dramatic troupe and was taking lead roles. Probably his first picture was 'Ambikapathi'. States that 'it was a mile-stone in his glamorous film career'.

Bhagavatar had acted in a number of tamil films, viz.,

Krishna Kumar	Sati Sukhanya
Devakanya	Bhakta Kalathi
Prabhavati	Raja Rajeswari
Kundalakesi	Arundati
Valmiki	Burma Rani, etc.

He acted in the kannada film 'Subhadra' and produced his own film 'Bhakta Kumbara'. Has acted in many other kannada films. He acted as Kalidasa and Basaveswara in Mahakavi Kalidasa and Jagajyoti, both of which got the National Awards in 1955 and 1959. He was running his own drama company called 'Uma Maheswara Sangeetha Nataka Mandali'.

#### Honours & titles :

Best Actor in Kannada Films	By Madras Cine Fans Association.
Natyacharya	By Sri Jagadguru Vageesa Panditharadhya.
Ganabhinaya Chandra	By Sri Raghavendra Swamiji.
Award for Karnataka Sastreeya Sangeetha	By Karnataka State Sangeetha Nataka Academy.
Gayaka Sikhamani	By Karnataka Gana Kala Parishat.
Gana Kala Gandharva	By Samsthana Vidwans
Award	By Sangeet Natak Akademy, Delhi in 1990.

Has been giving concerts on the All India Radio and was a member of the Karnataka State Films Advisory Board and Chairman of the Board of Music Examinations. Was President of the Karnataka Gana Kala Parishat. Bhagavatar was more a cine star than a vocalist.

Honnappa Bhagavatar has composed about 300 kritis and his compositions have been brought out in the book '*Omkaara Nadasudha*' published by Kannada Sahitya Parishat in 1983.

**HYDERABAD BROTHERS :                      D. SESHACHARY :                      (20th Cent.)  
D. RAGHAVACHARY :**

Duos have embellished Classical Carnatic music from the days of Lava and Kusa, the advantages being not far to seek. The measure of success of the duos hinges upon the degree of exploitation of the varied advantages in tone (individual and joint), reach and range of the individual artistes, felicity and expertise in segmental rendition – raga alapana, kriti, swara, etc. (*Vide* the Chapter on 'Woman in Melody' in Part I. Radha and Jayalakmi, Bombay Sisters, etc. have been highly successful as duos.) Alathur Brothers, Manakkal Brothers, Pozhakudi Brothers, Bellary Brothers, Raman – Lakshmanan Brothers, Ganesh – Kumaresh (violinists), etc., have established varying degrees of success in Carnatic music. Hyderabad Brothers are the latest who have established a very close rapport with the music lovers and carved out a niche for themselves quite soon after their advent.

The Brothers enjoy a cultivated voice. Their rendition is entirely traditional in concept, projection and coverage. They enjoy total alignment to sruti, plan their concert menu with professional skill and sing with measured precision. The high sense of faith in the classical content is kept up invariably at successive concerts. 'With strong voices, their rendition is marked with thrust, energy and mastery over art with aesthetic awareness. Seshachari's strength and vigour in alapana is matched by the softness of Raghavachari.' It would appear that they have adopted the concert pattern of Ariyakudi Ramanuja Ayyangar with success. Quite a professional approach with efficiency.

\* \* \* \* \*

## TWO IN ONE

- i. Can two players play on a single musical instrument ? Yes.

Keeranur Govindaswami Pillai, a zealous nagaswara player, wished to do something unique. So he took his brother-in-law Muthuswami Pillai and both played a kriti (song) on a single pipe – one went on blowing the pipe and the other fingered it!

— (ELLARVI)

- ii. Daughter of Devakottai Narayana Ayyangar, Vedavalli Srinivasan, Lecturer, Music College, Madras paired two handicapped students to play on a single veena. One girl used her left hand on the frets while the other provided the meetu (tuning). Veena maestro S. Balachander was the Chief Guest at the demonstration.

## I

**ILLANGO - POET-MUSICOLOGIST :****(Second Century A.D.)**

Mother got the throne for him. But he treated it as evil and the right secured for him as monstrous sin opposed to all canons of dharma. Not only did he reject it but underwent penance till the rightful claimant came back after fourteen years of exile. That was Bharata in Epic Ramayana. But the scion of the Chera Dynasty of the West Coast, Illango scorned even the suggestion that he was the most suitable to ascend the throne. Thus far, his life was a replica of Bharata. To avoid any future possibility or suspicion, he took to renunciation. That was so like Bhishma of the epic Mahabharata. This Prince of Magnificence brought out the finest fragrant gold of tamil works – the epic called '*Çilappatikaram*', woven around an anklet. It is a beautiful story of virgin chastity, unmatched music and dance, love and remorse, wrongs and morals and ultimate tragedy of the noblest type with a king dying the minute he realises his folly in condemning to death an innocent person and with a city reduced to ashes for miscarriage of justice! Mahakavi Subramania Bharati thundered that 'we would destroy the world if an individual is left without food.' Kannagi, the heroine (an Angel of Chastity) destroys the City of Madurai when her innocent husband, a mortal is wrongly charged with theft and is beheaded. An innocent shall not be punished even if it be that several criminals are let off, says the unwritten codes of modern world. Nearly two thousand years back, the king dies (not killed like Charles I, or a Louis or a Czar) and the city is reduced to ashes because an innocent soul was wrongly punished. That was the glory of India that was ! Let us recollect the episodes of Manu Neeti Cholan and other Pillars of Dharma and Morality. One could then appreciate why Bharati was vehement in asserting, 'You are the son of Bharat; Forget it not.' As Paul Brunton said, the Nation should not discard the good and great things it has inherited.

Illango portrays and weaves out a captivating story to bring home his message. Kovalan, a rich merchant marries Kannagi. The reception includes the dance performance of Madhavi, a danseuse of rare charm. A victim of bewitchery, Kovalan follows Madhavi instantly and life is enchanting to them both. Time fleets to them though not to the discarded spouse left a virgin. They join the Indra Festival celebrated on the seashore. Seeds of suspicion and embitterment are sown. Just as he left Kannagi on the day of marriage, Kovalan leaves Madhavi at the Festival and returns to the waiting wedded wife full of remorse. Chill penury necessitates the couple to leave for Madurai to sell one of her anklets of matchless beauty to 'start' their married life ! (They had never started that before and never did later too !)

At Madurai the kind hostess Madhuri, in whose charge Kannagi is left, sees bad omens even as Calpurnia saw in Shakespeare's Caesar – fourteen centuries later !. Kovalan gets cheated by a goldsmith; a just king passes the unjust illegal sentence of death for Kovalan's alleged crime of theft and Kovalan is beheaded. The Fire of Dharma, of Righteousness is kindled in the heart of innocent Kannagi and her wrath reduces the city to ashes, after the good king dies when he is confronted with unimpeachable evidence that Kovalan was innocent of any crime. A soul shattering tragedy. Law is supreme !

Illango brings out the whole panorama of music and dance to account in the course of the epic drama through Madhavi's art and later through Madhuri's '*Kuravai Koothu*'. Even the seven women who take part in the koothu are named after the seven notes – kural, thutham, kaikilai, uzhai, ili or eli, vilari and tharam! *Çilappatikaram* has been the eternal inspiration of the people of the South and Kannagi is worshipped as the Goddess of Chastity. There is a temple too for her near the state boundary.

There are two commentaries on the work – one by Arumpadaurai Asiriyar and the other by Adiyarkkunallar. Dr. S. Ramanathan has done original research into the musical aspects dealt with in it. The work has three cantos, thirty chapters and 5200 lines.

'It is the product of a master mind, a remarkable literary classic . . . It is astonishing how Illango incorporates Bharata's *Natya Sastra* bodily into his own work so that it fitted into the core of Tamil Culture. The graft is accomplished with consummate genius and foresightedness. . . '

— R. Rangaramanuja Ayyangar.

It is extraordinary that the work of the second century in the South accords with the work of Bharata in the North. *Çilappatikaram* is 'a real treasure-house of source material for a correct understanding of the music of South India'.

— T.S.Parthasarathy.

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## INDIRA SRINIVASAN - VOCALIST :

(b. May 30, 1938)

Qualification

Graduated in Music from the Kalakshetra and the  
Central College of Music, Madras (1957)  
MBA & Doctorate in Music at California University, USA

Indira Srinivasan has other qualifications too and had been a teacher while young. Conversant with many languages, she presented the thesis 'Influence of South Indian Music in Algerian Music and a Comparative Study of Music of India, Algeria and the West' for her doctorate. She has been giving and organising concerts, bhajans, etc., and imparting tuitions. She has given

demonstrations and presented essays. Has composed songs in tamil and english.

As president of the institution 'Omkaranadam', she arranges programmes herself taking prominent part in them including a cultural tour of Thailand and Singapore.. A multi-faceted lady, she is equipped in painting and drawing. To quote Swami Ranganathananda of Ramakrishna Mission, 'Combining in herself a good academic education, musical talents and capacity for painting and drawing and writing books, she has used all these to further the cause of national integration'.

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### HIS FIRST CONCERN

The musician read that the Duke of Edinburgh admonished Argentinian students who threw eggs at him saying:

' Do not throw any more;  
I have only a limited supply of suits. '

He relished the subtle humour and put it to use at his concert that evening:

' Enough, enough.  
Halt that rhythmic applause  
after every alapana, kriti and swara  
lest your hands should ache !  
I take note of your gestures !! '

\* \* \*

### A FRIEND IN DEED

1936. Teynampet Congress grounds, Madras. Golden Jubilee Celebrations. Semmangudi-Rajamanickam-Dakshinamoorti concert started. Dakshinamoorti Pillai strangely kept two mridangams as is seen in folk dances one over the other and played on both like an inspired genius. Labyrinths of laya intricacies were laid bare and fingering and sound variations cascaded throughout and he was the cynosure of all eyes. Concert over, his euphoric expression was:

" 'A' class. If a man is in difficulty,  
how can I refrain from giving a hand to help him ? "

Srinivasa Ayyar and Rajamanickam Pillai understood only then the reason for the inspired breezy percussion gala. Ayyar had just then come back after an operation for ENT and had been warned against exertion! Unsolicited help is the best of help indeed.

\* \* \*

## CORPORATE PATRONAGE

Eight decades back, Mahakavi Subrahmania Bharati in his scholarly treatise '*Sangita Vishayam*' advised musicians to look to the public for patronage as the days of rajas and zamindars were numbered. When feudal patronage crumbled, survival of arts and artists became a big question mark. Government patronage was halting and inadequate. Fortunately Corporate patronage stepped in to help music, painting, sculpture and architecture. SAIL, Air India, Tata, Larsen and Toubro, ITC, VST, CEAT, Sarabhais, Lalbhais, ESSO, HMT, etc., participated. Sangeet Sammelan now Sangeet Research Academy, Birla Academy of Art and Culture, Calcutta and the National Centre of Performing Arts, Bombay with endowments from Tatas and Mafatlal took to promoting classical music. In recent years, companies – big and small – sponsor specific programmes and concerts though not concerts on Doordarshan. In this, commercial advantages, publicity gains, building up their own image and the clout enjoyed by individual artists with individual commercial units play a significant part. 'Often performances are doled out by some companies more as a bonus from personal friendship than any laudable concern for art.' A prominent nationalised bank, a general insurance company and one or two companies are stated to maintain some balance in choosing the beneficiaries. But for sponsorship, art will suffer.

Artistes have always faced difficulties. Samuel Johnson waited on Dr. Radcliff, Master of his old College, who received him coldly. (Thank God, India is hot.) Johnson at least expected that the master would order for a copy of his '*Dictionary*'; but the master did not even choose to talk on the subject, says Boswell.

" There lives a man who lives by the revenues of literature and  
will not move a finger to support it ! "

— Samuel Johnson

Sponsorship might not cost even as much as a single corporate official's benami tour and yet, only a few think of it!

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## ELDERS

Public life in Madras badly needs the august presence, ripe wisdom and sage counsel of

Vayo Vridhdhas ,  
Jnana Vridhdas and  
Çila Vridhdhas.

— Dr. V. Raghavan.

Madras had these in abundance during the first half of the 20th century. An impressive galaxy of greats in the political, cultural, religious, art and every other walk of life lent grace. 1850 - 1950 was a golden era without doubt in Indian history.

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# J

## JAGANNATHA DASA - COMPOSER : ( 1726 - 1809)

Last of the Dasas of Karnataka, Jagannatha Dasa composed suladis and ugabhogas. His magnum opus '*Harikathamritha Sara*' is reported to be a mine of information with theological truths. Signature : Jagannatha Vittala.

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## Dr. MANCHELLA JAGANNATHA RAO - VAINIKA : (Jany. 21, 1921 – July 30, 1985)

Learnt music and veena under :	Adiraju Narasimhamurti, R. Padmanabha Ayyar and his wife, Sitalakshmi Ammal.
Debut :	1938 started playing for All India Radio
Posts held	1948 Staff Artiste, All India Radio and retired as Producer. Later he was Emeritus Producer.

Rao was a scholar of merit and a vainika "of the Andhra style, distinguished by the variety of 'meettus' used, the elaborate right hand technique and high speed passages."

He has done deep research in the padas of Kshetragna and the compositions of Bhadrachala Ramadas, opera music and choral music. He had headed the Tirupati Devasthanam school to propagate Annamacharya kirtanas.

Publications	:	Eighteen books including Kshetragna Padams, Adhumika Sangeetham and Bhadrachala Ramadas Kirtanalu	
Honours and Titles	:	Kalapravina by Andhra Pradesh Sangita Natak Akademy	1980
		Honorary Doctorate by Sri Venkateswara University	1981
		Kala Prapurna by the Andhra University	1985

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## JANAKI ACHUTHAN - MRIDANGIST : (20th Cent.)

Janaki Achuthan was an assistant commercial tax officer prior to her voluntary retirement. In the male dominated art of playing mridangam, she inherited the taste from K. Sankara Menon of Trichur, a renowned player who had accompanied the maestros of his days. Janaki learnt the art from her father and then from Vadakancherry Lakshminarayana Iyer, Muharsing R. Elumalai, the

all-time wizard T.S. Mani Ayyar and Dr. T.K. Murti. Her sisters are musicians. She has accompanied prominent artistes and is a graded artiste of All India Radio and Doordarshan.

Had won the All India Radio Music Competition Award and the Indian Fine Arts Society Award in 1985.

\* \* \*

**Prof. S.R. JANAKIRAMAN - MUSICOLOGIST and VOCALIST :**

**(b. July 12, 1928.)**

" Sing, Sing Ye forth your songs of praise,  
Ye Priyamedhas, sing your songs- ".

— *Atharva Veda* XCII-5.

Janakiraman, S.R. was the distinguished Head of the Department of Musicology, S.V. College of Music and Dance, Tirupati for twenty-eight long years and is now Research Officer, Music Academy, Madras. Earlier he was with the Besant Theosophical College, Madanapalle during 1955-60. A relentless seeker of the underlying basic principles, ideologies and truths in the allied but conflicting fields of lakshana and lakshya of Carnatic music, seeking its parts as forming an organic whole, S.R.J., as he is well known in music circles, is one of the few competent authorities on music and musicology who can keep the lay and the professional spellbound for hours with masterly, sometimes devastating, exposition and thought-provoking elucidation. His assessments are well balanced and original. At the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan on August 8, 1990, he observed :

'Music is an inexact science; can change from time to time : its rules are ever - changing. Music appreciation + Tradition + Change constitute the health and swaroopa of music at a given time. Consistent with tradition and conventions, innovation is vital but it should not lose its firm moorings in Carnatic classicism.'

Janakiraman is not only a master of musicology but is a vocalist of high calibre. As a teacher, he has handled all classes at Sri Venkateswara University and the M.A. class of Sri Padmavati Women's University – both at Tirupati. Side by side, he has been giving concerts on the All India Radio and sabhas in the country. He has presented numerous papers and lecture-cum-demonstrations at different universities and institutions. A forceful yet refined speaker commanding a rich vocabulary, he has a vast repertoire of sources and authorities to sustain and substantiate *sans peur et sans reproche* (fearless and faultless). His forceful speeches would seem to draw inspiration from Lord Keynes' epigram:

‘ Words ought to be a little wild because they represent  
the assault of thought upon the unthinking ! ’

Other posts held :	Member, Experts' Advisory Committee, Music Academy, Madras since 1978. Dean, Faculty of Fine Arts, Nagarjuna University -5 years Chairman & Member of Examining Boards of different Universities. Member, Board of Studies since 1962 Visiting Professor of Musicology, Govt. College of Music, Madras, Kalakshetra & Annamalai University. Senior Professor, Music Academy Teachers' College 1989 - 1990. Research Officer, Music Academy, Madras.
Titles & Honours :	Honoured by the Andhra Pradesh Sangeeth Natak Academy in 1968 and 1976. Madras Music Academy Awards in 1977, 1983 & 1988. T.T.K. Memorial Award Certificate of Merit from Music Academy, Madras. Sangita Kala Jyoti from Suswara, Madras Jnana Saraswati Peeth Award, 1990. Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar Award 1991.

Apart from the numerous papers presented by him on art forms, methodology, systems, aesthetics and various other aspects of music and musicology, he is the author of '*Sangeetha Sastra Saramu*' (two volumes) in telugu published in 1986 – 89. Evolution and history of raga lakshanas, important concepts presented in various works from *Natya Sastra* to *Sangraha Chudamani* have been correlated and explained. 'The two volumes cover the entire gamut of the theory and practice of Carnatic music.' (TSP)

### Disc recordings :

Janakiraman has given a general elaboration of the history and technical aspects of Varna with representative specimen in a video cassette titled 'On Varnam Through Ages' comprising four tana varnas in Ata tala, three pada varnas, etc. He explains that Varna is God's gift to world's musical thought peculiar to Carnatic music alone evolved early in the 18th century. The video documentation would seem to be the first of its kind for Carnatic music.

Born of Dr. Rangaswamy Iyer and L.R. Gowri Ammal, his education and musical training covered :

B.A. from Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati  
 Sangeetha Siromani from Madras University  
 Sangeetha Vidwan from the Govt. College of Carnatic Music, Madras  
 (with distinction)

Diploma from Kalakshetra 1945-49.

Had his vocal training under stalwarts like Alathur Venkatesa Ayyar, Sathur Krishna Ayyangar, Tiger Varadachariar and Budalur Krishnamurti Sastry and studied musicology under P.K. Rajagopala Ayyar and Prof. P. Sambamurty.

Prof. Janakiraman is a senior and honoured musician and musicologist whose expert opinions are highly valued. A serious research - oriented thinker, he is original in his constant endeavours to reach and lay open the hidden values and secrets of classical music. The musicologist-vocalist-pedagogue should naturally come up for the top honours of the Music Academy in the near future.

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## **JANAKI SUBRAMANIAM - VOCALIST**

**(b. December 2, 1930)**

The dichotomy of the musical career of Janaki Subramaniam is greed, an insatiate longing to learn everything in music from everyone of merit and acceptance of Tyagaraja's '*Nidhi Chala Sukhama*' dictum. Starting with her mother Lakshammal while yet a child, Janaki Subramaniam has had her training under Nemam Krishnamurty Bhagavathar, Manakkal Mani, Varadarajan and Apathsahayam Iyer, K. Lalitha, K.J. Nathan, Madhava Rao, Bangalore Nagarathinamma, Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar, Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar, S.G. Krishnan and N.S. Ramachandran. Has she stopped? No. She, at the age of sixty, is a disciple of M.A. Narasimhachar and Mathur Shankaramurty. Not enough to quench her thirst, she learnt North Indian music from an equally impressive galaxy including Ustad Hafeez Ahmed Khan, etc. She is, besides, a graduate in arts and in music too. This is one aspect of her career.

Endowed with a sweet voice, Janaki Subramaniam renders the kritis, etc. with understanding and feeling and her handling of sahitya is clear. She is one of the artistes who have proved that the concept '*Nidhi Chala Sukhame*' by dedicating her music to philanthropy of various good causes from the Prime Minister's Relief Fund to the Kanchi Kamakoti Sri Sankara Mutt and Kanchipuram Sri Kamakshi Amman temple services. 'Serve God and His people through Melody' has been the keynote of her life throughout. That is the other aspect.

Daughter of Prof. S. Ganapati Subramaniam of Presidency College, Madras and Lakshammal, brother's daughter of G.A. Natesan, Editor of the renowned '*Indian Review*' and daughter-in-law of Dr. K. Ramiah, the distinguished rice-

her mother, her sisters too were well trained in music. Made her maiden performance at the age of seven at the Tyagaraja Samadhi, Tiruvaiyaru in the presence of the famed Bangalore Nagarathinamma followed by concerts at the Mambalam Siva Vishnu Temple and the Fine Arts Society, Madras. Hundreds of others ensued on the All India Radio and at various centres in India and abroad. While young, she had sung at the prayer meetings of Mahatma Gandhi. One photo of 1951 shows her amidst stalwarts like Bangalore Nagarathinamma, Madurai Mani Ayyar, T.K. Jayarama Ayyar and Rajamanickam Pillai. Quite a proud image without doubt. Her acquaintance with twelve languages enables lavish contacts in life. Had performed before the top political leaders of India. Has founded the Karnataka Kala Mandali and Bharati Mandram for bharatanatyam.

Honours & Titles : Award from the Sangeet Natak Academy, Bihar 1966.  
 Bhakti Sangeetha Rathna by Shivananda Cultural Association, New Delhi 1970.  
 Honoured by Citizens Council, Rotary, Lions, etc., besides Awards from Music Academy and other institutions.

Concert tours abroad : W. Germany, U.K., U.S.A., Switzerland (both Carnatic music and Shamegazal).

Cassettes : Quite a large number of devotional and spiritual items.

Geneva –based Chitra Subramaniam, the investigative journalist who hit the headlines in 1989–1990, is her daughter.

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## **R. S. JAYALAKSHMI - VEENA ARTISTE:**

**(b. July 8, 1950)**

Parents : R. Subramaniam & Janaki Subramaniam.  
 Musical training under : V. Raghavan, G. Lakshmanan and R. Pitchumani under a Government of India scholarship.  
 Qualifications : Bachelor of Arts in Indian Music, Teacher's Training Course.  
 Post held : Veena Assistant, University of Madras - 15 years.

Jayalakshmi has been giving performances on the All India Radio, Sabhas, etc. and is one of the good performers.

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## **Adventure & Perfection**

‘Adventure and Perfection are the twin essentials for musical effervescence. Adventure, of course, carries the risk of failure.

But Perfection insures against it and wards off failure.’

— G.N. Balasubramaniam : (Source: Dr. M.L. Vasantakumari)

**LALGUDI G. JAYARAMAN - VIOLIN MAESTRO:****( b. Sept.17, 1930 )**

Born of Gopala Ayyar and Savitri Ammal at Lalgudi, Jayaraman, popularly known as 'Lalgudi', has the unique distinction of being in the direct lineage of Rama Ayyar, a direct disciple of Tyagarajah. Rural environment, profound musical heritage and well-directed training under his father and his paternal uncle, Kandaswami Bhagavatar of Madurai gave young Jayaraman immense potential and scope for imbibing confidence and expertise to flower forth into a magnificent violinist of the day. If Ghanam Krishna Ayyar would run to the peaceful Kabistalam and Ariyakudi Ramanuja Ayyangar to unfrequented haunts to have uninhibited practice with none but God and one's own soul to witness, the then quiet Lalgudi provided Jayaraman with the captivating environment and unpolluted *viçranti*, a *sine qua non* for imbibing and assimilating soulful classical music. Rightly Jayaraman considers that the stress-prone urban climate of the present day is not conducive to intensive practice. He, his forefathers and great men like the maestros of Tirukodikaval, Tiruvaiyaru, Tiruppunthuruti, Maharajapuram and Mudicondan were fortunate in having the benefit of the exhilarating calm and pristine peace for intensive practice. He had also the benefit of assimilating the diverse styles of stalwarts while young. At home he took his diploma in vocal and graduated in violin under his father.

Lalgudi Jayaraman's self-evident musical skill had perfected itself when he made his debut at the Perambur Sangeetha Sabha, Madras in 1947. Next year he made his advent at the Music Academy, Madras. In the meantime he had played for Madurai Mani Ayyar, who had earlier heard his violin-play on the radio and told T.S. Parthasarathy, 'This young vidwan has a great future in the musical world'. G.N. Balasubramaniam, who heard him at the Music Academy, straightaway booked him for a concert on February 10, 1947. Then ensued hundreds of concerts till 1986 when his switch-over to solos became complete and total. There was no musical worthy to whom he had not provided accompaniment from Mazhavarayanendal Subbarama Bhagavatar, a giant among the old stalwarts to O.S. Tyagarajan of the present and few percussionists are there who had not played with or for him. An *eka sanda grahi*, his innate genius drew musical wisdom and inspiration while young from varied sources like Madurai Mani Ayyar, G.N. Balasubramaniam, Alathur Brothers, Mudicondan Venkatarama Ayyar and Palani Subramania Pillai. The challenging allocations with Flute Mali and Veena Balachander enabled him to find exacting rhythm and excellence at the best. Experience helped him to evolve a unique style, all his own; and he started giving solos with his sister, Srimathi Brahmanandam from 1958 and continue with his son G.J.R. Krishnan since 1973 and his daughter J. Vijayalakshmi since 1979.

Lalgudi evolved a unique presentation of the three 'V' s - Violin, Veena and Venu (flute) and was one of the earliest to present jugalbandis with Ustad Vilayat Khan, Pandit Chaurasia and Amjad Ali Khan highlighting the complementary

character of the raga-based twins, the Carnatic and the Hindustani systems.

His musicianship is massive and his felicitous play vibrant, fresh, captivating and innovative. The tone is caressing, confident and soothing. He draws out beautiful phrases - at once sensitive and deep - all within the portals of true sampradaya. He has no faith in gimmicks. As Gowri Ramnarayan says, 'he has shown very effectively that one can set new trends and innovate to the delight of changing audiences the world over while retaining the essential traditionality of Carnatic classicism'.

His views are robust and constructive. Says that classical music is like rare ayurvedic herbs to be cautiously nurtured and carefully protected, that learning vocal music is vital before taking to instruments to equip and enlighten oneself with sruti and swara perfection, sahitya suddham and gamaka variations and that a calm and peaceful atmosphere conduces concentrated practice and development of artistic excellence. Lalgudi echoes Bekara Rama Amatya and Mudicondan Venkatarama Ayyar when he avers that 'Music should not belittle Melody'. He is against the boisterous thumping variety of rendition like Veena Dhanammal as it fails to bring out the benign soul and tranquilizing charm of the classical. Accompanying stalwarts provides a challenge to the violinist but he has taken to solos totally as the entire panorama is before him to explore and project; and his image too admits only that.

### Compositions:

A talented composer, his varnams, tillanas and pada varnams became instantly popular. His *Dwijavanti* and *Mohana Kalyani* tillanas are masterpieces. He sees the beauty of the lyrics with a loving heart and presents them with such colourful artistry and melodic identity that the compositions come out with immaculate clarity highlighting the bhava in full glow. The compositions are very popular both with musicians and dancers. Here they are:

Jatiswaram :	Rasikapriya	—	Adi
Varnams :	Sixteen including- Devar Munivar	Shanmugapriya	—
	Innam En Manam	Charukesi	—
	Sendil Mevum	Neelambari	—
			Adi
Tillanas :	<i>Behag, Hamir Kalyani, Maduvanti, Revati, Tilang, etc. ragas- 29 Nos.</i>		
Kritis	5 and		
Orchestral pieces	5.		

'His varnams and tillanas serve as admirable models for intellectual appreciation and understanding. Have great pedagogic value.' (Sulochana Pattabhiraman).

**Disc recordings:** Quite a large number .

## **Publications:**

*'Lalgudi Pancha Ratna Kritis'* of Tyagaraja with notation (1971).

## **Honours & Titles:**

Nadha Vidya Thilaka	By Lalgudi Music Lovers' Association.	1963
Nadha Vidya Ratnakara	By East West Exchange Inc. New York.	1971
Vadhya Sangeeta Kala Ratna	By Bharati Society, New York	1971
Sangeetha Choodamani	By Federation of Music Sabhas, Madras.	1971
Padma Sri	By the President of India	1972
Sangeet Natak Akademy Award		1978
State Vidwan, Tamil Nadu	By the Government of Tamil Nadu	1979
Kalaimamani	By Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram	1979
Asthana Vidwan	Tirumalai Tirupati Devasthanams	1979
Nadha Vendhan	By Sangeethalaya, Kuala Lumpur	1979
Bharata Sangeeta Ratna	By Sri Parthasarathi Gana Sabha, Bangalore	1980
National-level Award	By Chowdiah Memorial	1982
Saptagiri Sangita Vidwan Mani	By Tyagaraja Trust, Tirupati	1988
Sangita Kalasagara	By Visakha Music Academy	1991.

Lalgudi Jayaraman is a Member of the Experts Committee of the Madras Music Academy and is the Convenor-Trustee, Kanchi-Kamakoti Peeta Karnataka Sangeetha Seva Trust. The presentation of an Italian violin by Yehudi Menuhin captivated by the vibrant excellence of his violin-play deserves special mention.

March 8, 1992 was a landmark in the sparkling life of Jayaraman when he gave his first, a scintillating vocal concert before a crowded house apparently 'to express himself with a greater degree of fulfilment and in a search for a larger identity. Surprisingly the concert revealed a voice full of depth and flexibility, a double-reed tone producing an invigorating blend of soaring lifts, elegant moods and emphatic thrusts' (KSM). (It was no casual stunt as those of a Sunil Gavaskar jocularly mimicking the bowling of Abdul Khader or of a Javed Miandad monkeying the style of Kiran More.) The vidwan was at the real best confident of his style born of the rich legacy compounded by his own proud experiences of four decades and a half.

## **Concert tours:**

U.S.A., U.K. (Edinburgh Music Festival 1965 & Festival of India 1982), Europe, Canada, Middle East, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Phillipines, etc.



## Disciples:

Quite a number including his sister, son and daughter. The maestro regrets that many a competent trainee switches over to giving concerts before reaching the acme of perfection.

A thoroughly inspired violinist, vocalist and teacher, 'Lalgudi' combines the affluence of an intellectual with effulgent mastery and radiant command of the art, sure competence and exuberent style and enjoys wide popularity and respect. A genius, he is a creative artiste; his soulful rendition impregnates the mind with ecstatic fulfilment satisfying Paul Brunton's norm:

'What is the final call of true art ?  
Not to the work which expresses it ;  
But to the spirit which inspires it,  
The divine source of which it reminds us. '

Art is best when it liberates, motivates and transports the listener to ever-fresh realms of mysteriously sweet exhilaration exposed to inspired flashes. Jayaraman has that art. He is the guiding spirit behind the annual celebrations of the Festival of the Trinity at Tiruvarur.

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## THIRUVIZHA JAYASANKAR - THE FIRST GRADUATE (b. 1937) NAGASWARA VIDWAN:

'Thiruvizha' means Festival and when the birth-place of Jayasankar in Allepey district of Kerala is itself called so, naturally music has to be an innate urge and qualification. His father and guru, Tiruvizha Raghava Panicker had won many awards and honours. Jayasankar's musical training quite strangely kept pace with his scholastic studies. In 1962, he became the first graduate nagaswara vidwan with Music and Philosophy as his subjects. He got his 'Ganabhooshanam' (Vocal) diploma from Tirupunithura R.L.V. Music Academy and 'Ganapraveena' from Sri Swati Tirunal Sangeetha College, Trivandrum in 1963.

He made his debut accompanying the famous nagaswara maestro, Ambalapuzha Sankaranarayana Panicker at Kayamkulam in 1952 and got a gold medal from the maestro. 1956 saw him winning the All India Radio contest medal. His desire not to sacrifice his college course deprived him of the benefit of availing the Central Government Scholarship for advanced training in 1958.

Tiruvizha Jayasankar is a Staff Artiste with the All India Radio since 1965 and has given concerts all over India and at all the principal sabhas, All India Radio, television, etc. In legal parlance, a vested interest is created if uninterrupted user continues for twelve years and over. Jayasankar is a regular

performer for twelve years at the famous temples of Lord Muruga at Palani and Tiruchendur. Does he not acquire a right to perform annually before the Celestial Lord of Beauty and Benediction? Likewise, the Tamil Isai Annual Music Festival commences with his concert only since 1974.

Drawing inspiration from the Master of Melody T.N. Rajarathinam, he availed of violin and mridangam in lieu of tavil at Madras in 1970 as accompaniment.

### Honours and Titles:

Sunadhabhushana	by Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar at Madras	1970.
Award	by Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Academy	1982.
Nagaswara Praveena	by the Fine Arts Society, Ernakulam	1982
Nagaswara Isaimani,	}	by Mohanur Kanthamalai Murugan Koil by the Calicut Marar Kshema Sabha. by Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram
Nadaswara Isai Arasu		
Nagaswara Ratna		
Kalaimamani		1992.

### Concert tours:

Paris - Festival of India in 1985  
Berlin, Leipzig, Dresden, etc.

### Disc recordings :

Quite a number including two with vocal support by S. Janaki and Sundararajan with Valayapatti Subramaniam on tavil

### Films :

‘ Bhaja Govindam ’ with Yesudas as vocalist and  
‘ Bala Parikshai ’ with T.M. Soundara Rajan and P. Suseela as vocalists  
‘ Swara Raga Sudha ’ with his participation has been brought out in four languages.

Jayasankar has inherited a rich legacy of musical talents and is one of the most popular nagaswara artistes in good demand.

\* \* \* \* \*

# K

## **KADRI GOPALNATH - SAXOPHONIST : (20th Cent.)**

Stated to be the only saxophonist in Carnatic music, Gopalnath hails from a nagaswara family of Mangalore. Known for his lyrical music on saxophone, his proficiency enabled him to participate in the Jazz India Music Festival and the International Music Festival in Czechoslovakia. Has been giving concerts on the All India Radio, Doordarshan, etc.

\* \* \*

## **KALIDAS N. NILAKANTA AYYAR - PEDAGOGUE : (b.Novr.16, 1903)**

A distinguished teacher who has embellished many teaching assignments in Madras, Kalidas Nilakanta Ayyar belongs to the Manambuchavadi Venkatasubbier line of Tyagaraja's disciples. Had his studies in music under his father Narayanaswami Ayyar and joined the Kalakshetra, Madras as teacher. He has notated several of Ramaswamy Sivan's songs adding chitta swaras. Was Teacher-Principal, Music Academy College and Professor of Music at the University of Madras.

\* \* \*

## **P. KALINGA RAO - COMPOSER & VOCALIST: (b.1915)**

Place of birth:	Pandiswara near Kundapur in Karnataka
Name of father:	Puttayya

A musician with a fine personality, he joined while young the dramatic troupe of Ranganatha Bhatta and donned lead roles and was famous for playing lady characters. Simultaneously he learnt Carnatic and Hindustani music and was giving concerts. Kalinga Rao went over to Madras and joined the Hindi Prachar Sabha and was composing songs for dramas introducing Western styles too. He was a popular radio artiste.

\* \* \*

## **KALLADAR - TAMIL MUSICOLOGIST : (8th or 11th century A.D.)**

*Kalladam* was his native village as well as the name of his work in tamil. *Kallādam katravarōdu mallādādhē* (Don't enter into argument with one who has mastered Kalladam) is a proverb. He is brought into this book for his very succinct summary of "Musicians' faults" and 'The Ten Beauties of Music' in his work *Agapporul Nool*.

### Faults of Musicians:

" Vayirukuzhi vangi, azhumugam kattadhu  
 Naçi, kakuli, vedikural, vellai  
 Peçakkizhiçai, orupuram ottai  
 Nettuyirppu eridhal, erindhu nindru erattai  
 Osai ezhidhal, kazhinokku ennap  
 Peçaru kuravum aaçodum matri. "

(Contracting the belly, weeping facial expression,  
 slipping from one tanam to another, roaring like a ghost,  
 bland singing devoid of 'mathrai, tanam, etc.',  
 adopting a hard bass tone, sidelining the soul of musical rendition,  
 slipping from one *pann* to another, tone resembling crow's,  
 bristling multiplicity of tones,  
 casual approach or laziness,  
 uncontrolled voice, opening mouth uncouthly,  
 absence of concentration and trembling of tuft  
 SUCH FAULTS ARE TO BE AVOIDED.)

### Note :

The last of the faults has not much currency now as tufts are a vanishing factor.

### Ten Beauties of Music :

" Vandin thariyum kanja naadhamum  
 eral van nilaiyum kazhai elai vizhavadhum  
 Aruvi oçaiyum muzhavin muzhakkamum  
 Valampuri çathamum verukinpunarchiyum  
 Innum endriçaiyappap palliya vidhiyodu  
 Mandharam madhiyam tharam evai moondrum  
 Thullai Thoongal thellithin melidhal  
 Koodiya ghanam anbodu parava. "

(Humming of the beetle,  
 resonant sound of bronze instruments,  
 fish-picker's swiftness and mode,  
 the fall of the bamboo leaf  
 – gamaka ornamentation in avarohana –  
 sound of the rivulet, spring channel  
 – voice modulation –,  
 sound of large percussive instruments,  
 – contrasting rendition –,  
 sound of valampuri conch,  
 passionate calls of the male cat in heat  
 – aggressive grip and emphasis –,

adopting good raga, sahitya and methods  
covering lower, middle and upper octaves,  
fleeting incursions, contrasting with  
slow delineations in the three octaves,  
soft fine-tuning, mellifluous tone,  
let music with these attributes flourish !

How will it then be?

'It will be like a rain of honey on a hillock of sugar'- (*çarukkarai kundrir then mazhai nandrena*), says Kalladar.

\* \* \*

**Prof. S. KALPAKAM - VIOLINIST:**

**(b. September 21, 1917)**

Prof. S. Kalpakam, M.A., B.G.L., was Professor in Music for about twenty years in S.P.W. College, Tirupati and was on the Board of Studies in Music, Sri Venkateswara University. She has been providing violin accompaniment to prominent musicians and giving solo recitals. Has set to tune compositions of Annamacharya in the original ragas indicated in the copper plates on which 12,000 songs of the Bard are inscribed and which are in the possession of Tirumalai Tirupati Devasthanams now. A disciple of Dwaram Venkataswami Naidu, Kalpakam learnt vocal music also and is active enough to give recitals.

\* \* \*

**KALPAKAM SWAMINATHAN - VAINIKA AND VOCALIST: (b. July 20, 1922)**

Parents : Seetharaman and Abhayambal

Place of birth : Chetalapatti, Tanjore district.

Kalpakam Swaminathan had her musical training initially under her mother and later music with veena under Anantakrishna Ayyar, T.L. Venkatarama Ayyar, Budalur Krishnamoorti Sastri and Musiri Subramania Ayyar. Her training in music has thus been under highly competent stalwarts. Started giving radio concerts from the age of twelve. An authority in Dikshitar kritis, she is a staunch devotee of traditional music and methods.

Has been Professor in Veena, Government College of Carnatic Music, Madras (now a training centre). Has served in several selection committees. She is one of the respected members of the musical fraternity.

\*

Titles and Honours : Kalaimamani from Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram in 1980.

Certificate of Merit from the Music Academy in 1989.

Disc recordings.

\* \* \*

**M.A. KALYANAKRISHNA BHAGAVATAR - VAINIKA & PEDAGOGUE:****(1913 - 1979)**

Place of birth	:	Manjappara in Palghat.
Name of father & guru	:	M.K. Anantarama Bhagavatar, Veena Vidwan of Travancore Palace.
Academic Qualification	:	Intermediate (Collegiate)
Posts held	:	Music Professor at the Swati Tirunal Academy, Trivandrum from its inception to 1944.  Professor of Music, Central College of Carnatic Music, Madras - 1949-1967  Principal, Sri Ramanathan College of Music, Ceylon - 1967-1969  Visiting Professor, Wesleyan University, U.S.A.
Honours & Titles	:	Kerala Sangeeth Nataka Mandram Award, 1962  Asthana Vidwan, Travancore Palace.
Concert tours	:	Ceylon and USA.

**Disc recordings :**

LPR from his performance in 1973 at the United Nations with his daughter Lakshmi Ranganathan.

Kalyanakrishna Bhagavatar hailed from a family of veena vidwans and was a sixth generation artiste. Grandfather Kalyanakrishna Bhagavatar (1847 - 1891) was famous for his original style of veena play, which came to be hailed as the Travancore style and his great grandfather Venkitadri Bhagavatar (1814 - 1884) was a Court musician during Swati Tirunal's reign. M.A. Kalyanakrishna Bhagavatar was a prominent and popular veena vidwan, equally felicitous in giving vocal concerts. He had given a large number of concerts on the All India Radio and elsewhere. The disciples of the life-long veena teacher included Maharani Kartigai Tirunal, daughter Lakshmi Ranganathan and Rajeswari Menon, a performing artiste. P. Hariharan says, 'He sang whatever he could play on veena and played on veena whatever he could sing'. He was a favourite with all from his young days and was called by the pet name of 'Krishna Mani'.

\* \* \*

**TIRUVALAPUTHUR T.A. KALIYAMURTY - TAVIL ARTISTE:****(b. June 6, 1947)**

Place of birth	:	Tiruvalaputhur
Parents	:	V. Arunachalam Pillai - Rajamani Ammal.
Musical heritage	:	Vaithilingam Pillai, grandfather was mridangist. His brother Pasupathia Pillai was a tavil stalwart of his times.
Musical training	:	Under maternal uncle N.Kadirvel Pillai - Three years Under Pasupathia Pillai, great grandfather at - Tiruvalaputhur.

Kaliamurthy is a distinguished artiste in tavil providing 'special' tavil accompaniment ('Special' in percussion circles denotes selection-grade status and seniority) to the nagaswaram maestros of Tiruvenkadu, Tiruvizhimalalai, Namagiripettai, etc. and to Madurai Brothers and Clarinet A.K.C. Natarajan. Has coached about thirty tavil trainees. Has participated in music festivals. He was a judge in the Local Audition Committee of All India Radio.

Concert tours : Sri Lanka, U.S.A., Canada

**Titles :**

Layagnana Tavil Arasu by Sri Venkateswara Bhakta Sabha, Madras, 1968  
 Sunatha Tavil Isai Chakravarti  
 Janaranja Tavil Isai Chakravarti  
 Din Dama Kalanipuna Makuda Ratna  
 Bala Bhishveswara by Vidwans of Karnataka State.  
 Kalaimamani by Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram in 1981.  
 Laya Selvam by Muthamizh Peravai in 1983.

\* \* \*

**KALYANI GANESAN - VEENA VIDVAMSINI : (b. Novr. 16, 1949)**

A graduate in music of the Madras University, Kalyani Ganesan had her further training at the Government Music College, Madras and got the Sangita Vidwan diploma in 1967 and did her advanced training also there. Balambal and M.A. Kalyanakrishna Bhagavathar were her tutors in veena. She is giving concerts on the All India Radio, etc., and is a lecturer in veena at the Government Music Training Centre, Madras.

Concert tours : Canada.

\* \* \*

**KALYANI SHARMA - VOCALIST - VEENA ARTISTE: (b. April 25, 1936)**

Place of birth : Trivandrum  
 Parents : K.V. Iyer and V. Janaki  
 Qualifications : Gana Bhooshana in Veena from the Swati Tirunal Music College, Trivandrum.  
 Vidwan (Advanced Course) in Vocal Music from same college.

Kalyani Sharma had the benefit of training when Dr. Semmangudi Srinivasa Ayyar and K.S. Narayanaswami were at the College. She had training under Brinda and Mukta in padams and javalis.

Posts held : Junior Professor, Swati Technical Music College,  
 Trivandrum  
 Promoted as Professor but resigned.  
 Teacher in Music, Bharatiya Music School,  
 Bombay — 1964 - 1970

Teacher & now Head of Veena Section,  
Shanmukhananda Sabha Music School, Bombay  
from 1971.

Kalyani Sharma has been giving concerts since 1957 in sabhas and for India Radio. Has a good repertoire and imaginative rendition. Has won prizes. Enjoys a sweet voice.

Concert tours : U.S.A. and Singapore.

\* \* \*

## **KAMAKOTI SASTRI - COMPOSER: (19th Century)**

A prominent composer of Karnataka in sanskrit and telugu, Kamakoti Sastri had brought out many songs that are now in constant usage like –

<i>Nirupamana</i>	in <i>Madyamavati</i>
<i>Ramapati</i>	in <i>Bhairavi</i> and
<i>Devadhi Deva</i>	in <i>Todi</i>

\* \* \*

## **KAMALA VISWANATHAN - VEENA VIDVAMSINI : (b. May 5, 1919)**

Kamala Viswanathan studied music with P. Balakrishnan, Musiri Subramanya Ayyar, and M.A. Kalyanakrishna Bhagavathar at the Government Music College and got 'Vidwan' title in veena and vocal. A performing artiste on the All India Radio and elsewhere. Had won prizes in the sixties.

\* \* \*

## **KANCHANA VENKATASUBRAMANYAM - VOCALIST: (b. 1919)**

Place of birth	: Kalpatti
Parents	: Venkataramana Ayyar, Dharmadhikari of Sringeri Math and Anandalakshmi Ammal.

Kanchana is a village gifted to Venkataramana Ayyar by the Srinivasa Acharya. The Vainika mother taught him music and Venkatasubramanyam learnt further under Chitrakodi Narayana Sastri, Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar and G.N. Balasubramaniam. Made his debut at the famous Mookambika temple and has been giving numerous concerts with eminent accompanists. He established the Lakshmi Narayana Sangita Sabha gurukula institution which trains numerous disciples. He enjoys a pleasing voice, good style of rendition and innovative capabilities. His son Subburam is a violin vidwan.



**K.V. KANTHAMANI - VEENA VIDVAMSINI :****(b. January 14, 1923)**

Born at : Siruvathur in South Arcot district,  
 of : Flute vidwan Venkataramayyar & Saradamba.  
 Had her training : in vocal with her father and  
 in veena with Pondicherry H. Ramakrishna Bhagavatar  
 and Veena Varadayya of Cuddalore.

She had gurukulavasa training for five years with Karaikudi Sambasiva Ayyar. Made her debut at Tirupadiripuliyur and has given a large number of concerts in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh and on the All India Radio. At Jaffna she got the title of 'Yazhisai Vallar' and has been a teacher in veena in different institutions.

\* \* \*

**KARAIKUDIYAR K.R. CHANDRAMOULI - MRIDANGIST :****(b.October 25, 1925)**

Karaikudiyar, meaning one who hails from Karaikudi, actually should have been 'Pallathurar' since Chandramouli was born at nearby Pallathur, of Ramachandra Ayyar and Balambal and is related to the Karaikudi Veena Brothers. Had his training under Karaikudi Natesa Ayyar and Karaikudi Kalaimamani Muthu Ayyar. Chandramouli claims that the gurukulavasa helped him immensely to flower into a prominent percussionist. Made his debut at the age of sixteen providing accompaniment to harikatha exponent Ramachandra Bhagavatar along with his guru at Kottaiyur. Has been working as Professor and Head of the Department of Mridangam, Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Sabha, Bombay for the last seventeen years.

Concert tours : Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, Australia.

K.R. Chandramouli suggests that some senior mridangam artistes could jointly frame and publish a uniform regular basic syllabus for students undergoing training in the various *paddhati(s)*.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Path to Erudition**

Joe Louis, the magnificent boxer said:

' Everyone wants to go to Heaven;  
 But few wants to die! '

Even so, some capable, promising juniors do not seem to stay on to complete their apprenticeship as they could not withstand the lure of publicity, income and media praise. Lacking expertise and depth, these flowers fade out before attaining full bloom.

**KEERANUR BROTHERS - NAGASWARAM DUO:****A. Sivasubramaniam alias Chinnathambi Pillai: (Jan. 1897 - Mar. 9, 1942)****B. Kannappa Pillai (June 27, 1891 - July 13, 1944)**

	A	B
Native Place :	Keeranur, Nannilam taluk, Tanjore district.	Sirupuliyur. Belonged to Pandanallur, a nursery of dancers.
Parentage :	Pallavi Govinda Nainakkar & Sundarammal. (Father was Asthana Vidwan, Chunambedu Zamin)	Kandaswami Pillai and Marimuthu Ammal
Musical training under :	Father Govinda Nainakkar, Kanchi Naina Pillai, Keeranur Muthu Nainakkar.	Keeranur Muthu Nainakkar and Mannargudi Chinna Pakkiri.

Both had thus common training under Keeranur Muthu Nainakkar but were giving recitals separately. Later they combined and under the name 'Keeranur Brothers' made their debut at the marriage of Tiruvidaimarudur P.S. Veeruswami Pillai, who too rose to the top soon after.

The brothers were a popular duo and were in good demand. Had played at the memorable All India Music Conference, 1927 held along with the All India Congress Committee session at Madras. Both were individually capable vidwans. Chinnathambi had given vocal concerts also and provided tavil accompaniment to others. T.N. Rajarathinam brought out a special commemoration volume to condole Chinnathambi's death. Vedaranyam Vadamurthi and several others were Chinnathambi's disciples.

The eminent nagaswaram duo had constant periods of estrangement; *Sruti layam* and *Sruti bhedam* had co-existed by turns! Artistes who fare well as duo fare ill individually when they fall asunder similar to doubles players in sport events.

Title :

' Sabha Ranjitha Bhooshanam ' in 1937.

Disc recordings.

**I. KESI - FLAUTIST:****(b. April 20, 1921)**

Hails from : Palamaneri, Tanjore dt.

N. Kesi learnt vocal music under Jalra Gopala Ayyar, when Flute Mahalingam Mali) was learning flute under the same guru. She felt attracted to the flute rendition of Mali. However, she had to shift her musical training from Jalra Gopala Ayyar at Nagapattinam to Palamaneri Swaminatha Ayyar at Tanjore. Swaminatha Ayyar was a Sangita Kalanidhi and a prominent vidwan. Finally she became a disciple of Mali himself in 1943 at Madras, circumstances avouring it with the transfer of her husband to the City. Earlier too, she had been giving flute concerts and with the intensive training under and imbibing the style of Mali, she began giving concerts in sabhas and elsewhere in large numbers. Mali had so much confidence in her that at the Tambaram Sangeetha Sabha in 1957 he announced that he was not giving the concert and that Kesi would play instead with the accompanists M.S. Gopalakrishnan and Ramnad Eswaran on violin and mridangam respectively! She had played with her guru Mali in about twenty concerts and they were a challenging task well executed by her.

A torch-bearer of Mali style, she is one of the popular flautists who brings out the fragrant shades of melody with control over laya. She is training a large number of disciples. Was Visiting Professor for two months in the Government College of Carnatic Music and is on the Audition Committee of the All India Radio, Madras.

**Disc recordings.****Concert tours :**

Sri Lanka in 1960, Europe in 1964.

Kesi is one of the select prominent, lady flautists and perhaps the only one who has been giving concerts for five decades. One of her disciples G.Sridhar gave a twenty-four hours recital at the Madhava Perumal Koil, Madras, on September 7, 1991.

\* \* \*

**VELUR KESAVADASA - COMPOSER****( Died 1948 )**

Son of Venkatasubba Dasa, Kesavadasa was a famous composer in kannada. *Karnataka Bhakta Vijaya*, *Sri Haridasa Sahitya* and *Sri Raghuvamsa Vijaya* are all his creations.

\* \* \*

**R.R. KESHAVAMURTY - VIOLIN MAESTRO:****(b.1916)**

Musical heritage : Father Ramaswamayya was a vocalist:  
Grandfather Nagappa was a a kanjira player.  
Another grandfather Venkataramayya was a composer.

Musical training under : Chicka Rama Rao and Bidaram Krishnappa.

Keshavamurthy attained mastery in violin play while still young and was a constant accompanist to reputed musicians. In 1930 he was with the melody - king B.S. Raja Ayyangar and went round with him for concerts. A popular soloist, he has given a large number of concerts on the radio, television and sabhas in addition to many lecture - demonstrations which are a delight to music-lovers. He has been training many disciples.

M. Surya Prasad records in the '*Hindu*' that the 76-year old maestro even today has a rare and youthful vigour and verve in playing on a seven-stringed violin and after T. Chowdiah and Ratnagiri Subba Sastry, it is he who has held the baton intact. His exposition is rich in the composite eloquence of bhava, raga and tala.

Honours & Titles: Karnataka Sangeetha Nritya Academy Award 1980.  
T. Chowdiah Memorial (State Level) Award 1982.  
Sangita Vidyasagara, etc.  
Sangeetha Kalaratna from the Bangalore Gayana Samaja 1991.

Rudrapatnam in Hasan district is a cradle of musicians and Keshavamurthy is one of its distinguished sons. He has published as many as eighteen books in kannada on sangita.

Disc recordings number six.

\* \* \* \* \*

***Tiruppalli Ezhucchi:***

One can be shaken out of slumber if really asleep but not when he feigns to be so. Perhaps the Lord of the Universe has the merit of falling under the latter category. Otherwise why should so many saints sing 'Tiruppalli Ezhucchi' to wake Him up?

Sage Viswamitra  
Vishnu Siddhar  
Thondaradipodi Azhwar and  
Manickavachakar have done the exercise.

Andal approached the devotees in a bid to wake them up in her 'Tiruppavai'.

**KIRUPANANDA VARIAR, TIRUMURUGA - SPIRITUAL CRUSADER:****(b. 1906)**

Age does not wither the infinite charm of his musical discourses nor slacken the tempo of his crusades for spreading spiritual and moral precepts and message around the tamil-knowing world. He has the unique distinction of drawing the largest crowds consistently for nearly seven decades. One could witness him bubbling with wit and humour like a child, jostling around cities and villages in different parts of the world like a youth and pouring out ancient wisdom drawn from the sacred lore of India filtered in the context of modern political, social and cultural happenings like an aged seer. He exhibits his firm faith and eternal hope in the future of Bharath like the saints of old. His cutting, yet delicious puns in spiritual capsules bringing to ridicule self-righteous and pseudo political and social leaders are winsome. His memory is astonishingly fresh. His command of tamil is total and of sanskrit much. His knowledge of the theory of music is rich. Though he lost the feminine grace of his voice long back, still at the age of eighty-six, he gives the outline and lead to his accompanists to elaborate. He is a master of discourses commanding absolute respect from all sections of the public and popularity from every segment of the community. His contribution in the field of discourses is colossal. Above all, he had placed his art and his power at the service of the Lord and his favourite saints Arunagirinathar and Vadalur Ramalinga Swamigal. The number of renovation of temples and other good causes espoused by him is impressive. Physically he is tall and massive with a liberal anointment of sacred ash (*vibhuti*). The massive exterior encases a good, affable, gracious and benevolent soul.

He is Tirumuruga Kirupananda Variar, son of Mallaya Das Bhagavatar, a musical discourser and Kanakavalli Ammal. He had a very rigorous, full-time training in tamil, tamil hymns and music under his father and was not allowed to play. (Without doubt, he would have equally become a very good athlete but for this ban while young.) At the age of twelve, he could command ten thousand hymns and songs. He followed his father giving voice-support. Learnt Tiruppugazh from Madurai Sami Ayyar and got '*diksha*' as was the practice in Veera Saiva families from Siddhanta Sarabham Palani Esana Sivachariar Swamigal. He studied veena under a local teacher for a while and later under Tenmatam Srinivasachariar to whom Variar has the greatest respect. He would pay obeisance to him twice - at the beginning and at the end of his daily tuitions.

'Kirupananda, why do you perform namaskars twice?'

'Swamigale, people take coffee dozens of times. Can I not pay obeisance at least twice to my respected Guru ? ', was the innocent reply.

This is, in essence, his approach still. The teacher loved him and he revered the guru. As he was to take leave after his training, he had little money to give as guru-dakshina and his father sent him just two dhotis to be presented. The

lad was sad. Availability of resources did not match his inclinations. Just then, he got a good offer to perform some musical discourses and with Rs. forty got from them, he purchased a three-sovereign chain and a dollar and with the usual auspicious betel, etc., he was able to substantially satisfy his ambition to make a good present to his veena guru. When the guru died, he helped his family too. Once his father took him to Veena Seshanna and got a veena from him.

It is noteworthy to mention that he has not started any sect while that is very easy for him with his immense knowledge, wide popularity and vast following. He reflects the immense wisdom of Hindu religion, seers and scriptures and as a musician, he is a traditionalist. The following anecdote indicates the firm faith reposed particularly by women in his discourses:

Municipal Vice-Chairman Shanmugham Pillai jocularly found fault with him once for giving wrong advice to women. How ?

' You have spoilt the outlook and conduct of my wife ! She heard your discourse yesterday evening. This morning at 5 a.m., she poured chill water on my legs while I was asleep and when questioned on her madness, she avers that you had advised women to follow Anasuya's devotion to her spouse-saint! I do not know how many other women had woken up so early and poured cold water on the legs of their sleeping husbands and decorated them with flowers ! '

### Concert tours:

Many countries in different continents.

### Titles & Honours :

These have little meaning to a soul like Variar. Some are given here :

Tiruppugazh Jyoti Pravachana Samrat	}	By Swami Sivananda Saraswati, Rishikesh.
Arulmozhi Arasu	:	By Head of Sri Tirugnana Sambandar Mutt, Madurai.
Saraswati Katakshamrutham	:	By Sri Paramacharyal, Senior Sankaracharya, Kanchipuram.
Shatmatanabhuta	:	By the Jeer, Ahobhila Mutt.
Isai Perarignar	:	By Tamil Isai Mandram, Madras.
Kalaimamani	:	By Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram.
Amudhamozhikondal	:	By Adheenakartar, Dharmapuram Mutt.
Tiruppani Chakravarti & Tiruppani Sarabham	:	By Bhavani Tirumurai Kazhagam.
Sorpozhi Vallal	:	By Velur Shanmugha Adiyar Sangham.

Variar has not escaped from the pressures of well-meaning admirers to appear in cinemas. 'Thunaivan', 'Tiruvarul' and 'Deivam' have the distinction of his appearance.

He is economic in his personal life and spends his large earnings for the good of his kith and kin and the numerous public causes he espouses. Eminent Editor, Kalki Krishnamurti wrote full four decades back :

"How an individual like Variar could accomplish individually the entire construction of Satya Gnana Sabha at Vadalur passes comprehension. When one sees the multi-sided activities of Variar, he has perforce to conclude that -

"Variar is not an individual at all ;  
He is a mighty Institution himself." "

Variar is going strong rich with the spoils of time, unrolling the ample pages of his deep erudition and refined knowledge, scattering plenty amidst tamil-speaking crowds. In his own words, 'whether the sun rises or not, there is invariably a daily lecture of his'. What is the secret of his ready wit, ample knowledge and envious memory ? ' Brahmacharya ' (celibacy), is his answer! Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar too observed celibacy to uphold his service to music; (celibacy is used in the sense of refraining from sexual indulgence.)

Richard, the *Coeur de Lion* was at home, it is said, on his horseback. Variar, undoubtedly a giant among musical discourses, is at home only in the midst of vast crowds sharing his profound preponderant spiritual wisdom with them. For over sixty-seven years, he has been on his peripatetic rounds and is indeed a KSHETRAGNA. The number of his lectures should find an entry in the Guinness Book of Records.

\* \* \*

## KOHALA - MUSICOLOGIST :

To Kohala several works are ascribed such as -

Kohalamata  
Tala Lakshana  
Dattila Kohaliyam

Kohaliya  
Abhinaya Sastra

Kohala Rahasya  
Sangita Meru

Kohala is one of the ancient authorities but his period could not be fixed with certainty. Prof. R. Satyanarayana says:

'Bharata promises that the rest of the science of dramaturgy would be revealed by Kohala. *Kalinatha* extracts from *Sangita Meru* ascribed to Kohala. Matanga and others too extract from his works.' Such bristling factors confound efforts to fix the period of the eminent author, it is said.

\* \* \*

**UMAYALPURAM N. KOTHANDARAMA AYYAR - (Oct 27, 1889-c. 1975)**  
**MRIDANGAM & GHATAM ARTISTE:**

Son of Ghatam Narayana Ayyar, Kothandarama Ayyar learnt ghatam and mridangam under his father and had his training in music under Veena Vaidyanatha Ayyar. One of the prominent percussionists of his day, he was noted for his excellent fingering, rhythm and tonal development on the mud pot (ghatam). He developed a new and basic 'sollu' called 'tharikattu' with new fingering and a variety of effects on the pot with remarkable tempo and clarity of sound. In the course of his play, he used to throw the pot up to provide a different sound to the delight of the audience. He had accompanied most of the top artistes and was one of the few who improved the image of ghatam artistes. Umayalpuram K. Narayanaswamy is carrying on the percussive legacy of the family. (Page 112 of 'A Garland' modified.)

Concert Tours : Singapore, U.K. and Germany

\* \* \*

**MEESU KRISHNA AYYAR - COMPOSER: (1872 -1940)**

Krishna Ayyar hailed from Ramanathapuram and is the composer of kritis like

- Sri Rukmani  
 Karunavasa

*Manirangu raga and  
 Abhogi raga*

Alathur Venkatesa Ayyar has notated his songs.

\* \* \*

**MYLATTUR KRISHNA AYYAR - MRIDANGIST: (c. 1868 - 1922)**

Krishna Ayyar had his initial training under Alappuzha Annadorai Bhagavatar and then left Mylattu for Tanjore at the age of twenty or twenty-two, as Tanjore had then a galaxy of percussionists. He joined the celebrated Tanjore Krishna Bhagavatar's team of accompanists which included the vocal - support musicians Tanjore Panchapakesa Bhagavatar and Marudappa pillai. Later he entered the concert stage accompanying all top musicians. His play was noted for 'Nadha suddham, Kalapramana suddham, adjustability and anticipation'. His exhilarative play for pallavis, which were then most prominent, was very good.

\* \* \*

**VEENA KRISHNA AYYA - VOCALIST: VAINIKA :**

Krishna Ayya is said to belong to the celebrated Adippayya family of musicians and composers. An expert in tala, Ayya excelled in his permutations



and combinations providing blistering variations and ultimate synchronisation. He was known for his *Saptataleswaram*. Mummadi Krishna Raja Wodeyar made him his Asthana vidwan.

\* \* \*

#### **H.V. KRISHNAMURTI - VIOLINIST:**

**(b.1928)**

Had his initial training with his father and mridangam vidwan, Venkataramiah. Musical legacy spurred him on to take advanced training under the renowned T. Chowdiah along with Alagiriswamy, who is now a prominent performing violinist. Joined the Corporation High School, Bangalore in 1949. Was Professor in a Music College. H.V. Krishnamurti along with Veerabhadriah and Anoor Ramakrishna has been giving trio-violin concerts and had distinguished mridangists like Palghat Mani Ayyar and Umayalpuram Sivaraman as accompanists. He is both a good soloist and an accompanist.

\* \* \*

#### **K.N. KRISHNAMURTY - PERCUSSIONIST:**

**(b. 1926)**

Born at Koilamma near Palghat, K.N. Krishnamurty had his musical training under his father Narayana Ayyar first and then under Palghat Kunjumani and Palghat Mani Ayyar. Is a prominent mridangam and ghatam vidwan. Was employed in Firestone Tyres.

Concert Tours :      Singapore, Malaysia and Europe.

\* \* \*

#### **K.S. KRISHNAMOORTI - COMPOSER:**

**(b. May 19, 1914).**

Krishnamoorti was born at Kumbakonam and is a prolific writer and his works include:

Andaman Kaithi	- drama	1944
Isai Inbam	- songs	1945
Kalaivanan	- drama	1946
Amudha Tamilisai	- songs	1980

'Andaman Kaithi' won the prize of the Tamil Nadu Government. Has received the Sangita Natak Academy Award for his drama works. His songs had been handled by eminent musicians. His songs were set to tune by Guruvayur Kalaimamani Ponnammal. Melakaveri A.R. Kannan had assisted them in swara-tala adornments to the songs. Krishnamoorti had been honoured with the title of 'Kalaimamani' by the Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram. 'The songs are devotional with the beauty of *yati prasa*.'

\* \* \*

**C. KRISHNAMURTY - VAINIKA :****( b. 1934 - July 16, 1992 )**

C. Krishnamurty hails from a well-known family of veena artistes. Cheluvarayyaswamy, his father and guru was a veena artiste, musicologist and a disciple of V. Venkatagiriappa. Krishnamurty too had his gurukulavasam under Venkatagiriappa till he became the seniormost disciple of Dr. Doreswamy Iyengar. He has been giving concerts on the All India Radio, Television and elsewhere both on national programmes and regional items. He has been training a number of disciples both Indian and foreign. He is on the staff of All India Radio for the last eighteen years.

Concert Tours : Festival of India, USSR, 1987  
Festival of India, Germany in 'Pancha Veena' concert.

Titles :

Apart from recognition with the Shanmugavadivu Award in 1980 from the Music Academy, Madras and an honour from the Sankaracharya of Sringeri, he received the State-Level Chowdiah Memorial Award, 1992 from the Academy of Music, Bangalore.

\* \* \*

**NEEDAMANGALAM KRISHNAMOORTY BHAGAVATAR -****KRISHNA GANAM MAESTRO :****(1921 - Oct. 1, 1982)**

Uthukadu is one of God's creations where melody ruled in all its radiant beauty. Uthukadu Venkatasubba Ayyar (1700-1765) is one of the immortals among musical composers in tamil and sanskrit whose songs on Lord Krishna stand unmatched for beauty, fragrance of conception and felicity of expression. Pieces like *Taye Yasoda (Todi)*, *Palvadiyum (Natakurinji)* and *Alai Payude (Kanada)* continue to thrill thousands. Divine ecstasy, popular appeal, deep emotions and easy-paced tamil diction coupled with apt raga swaroopas created by him enthral the elite and the lay alike. Krishnamoorty Bhagavatar was a descendant in the sixth generation of the brother of Venkatasubba Ayyar, who was a celibate.

Bhagavatar kept alive the Uthukadu tradition of divine melody and 'Krishna consciousness' for several decades. Blessed with a melodic, mellifluous voice, conjuring presentation, elegant yet simple exposition and direct and innocent appeal to the finer and nobler sentiments of the audience distinguished his musical discourses. The Sage of Kanchi, the Paramacharyal advised him, initially a vocalist, to take to discourses and Bhagavatar became the prime mouthpiece of Uthukadu compositions. He resurrected them all and brought them to current use. His inspiring discourses were soulful but Fortune did not smile on him. He did not opt for the usual audience - response expedencies.

He was stoic, conservative and would not take even a violin. He carried on solo with conviction but it cost him dearly and the art too had lost much. Had he taken some accompanists, he would have surely dwarfed others but he was destined to be a victim of his own decision. The world too did not help him much.

Son of Gopala Ayyar and Janaki Ammal, he was born at Sembavali in Papanasam taluk, Thanjavur district. He stayed at Needamangalam and came to be called 'Needamangalam Bhagavatar'. If celestial Krishna was the eighth child to his parents, this Needamangalam Krishna too was the eight child to his parents. Probably this too had its subtle impact on him apart from the legacy of the family and his musical leanings and longings in promoting him as the effective instrument to popularise the *Krishna Gana* songs of his illustrious ancestor. It is significant that he was named after the Lord of the *Bhagawad Gita*.

He made his late debut at Nungambakkam in Madras in his thirtieth year with *Krishna Ganam* songs. Authentic presentation with enchanting melodic content featured his musical discourses and he came to be described as a re-birth of the illustrious Uthukadu Composer. The *Straits Times*, Singapore (February 2, 1982) wrote:

" What a shame that men with half his age  
cannot sing with such sustenance, half as well! "

Writes 'Kinnari' in '*Shanmuka*' (July 1991) :

' Krishnamoorthy Bhagavatar's performing finesse is to be experienced to be believed. He was an artiste, an aesthete and a performer with perception and punch... His voice has the twinkling radiance and vigour, its resilience and refinement inferior to no concert veteran. His percussive ingenuity would match any of the star-performers.'

Bhagavatar has notated most of the songs of Venkatasubba Ayyar and forty-two songs have been published with notation and seventy-nine without under the titles:

*Krishna Ganam,*  
*Navavarana kirtanas and*  
*Rasa Ganam.*

Financial constraint deters the publication of the remaining treasure left to posterity by Venkatasubba Ayyar. Presently Bhagavatar's daughter, V. Alamelu and his sons-in-law, Pandurangan and Sethuraman are propagating the Uthukadu compositions. Anyone interested in the publication of the remaining songs of Uthukadu can approach Bhagavatar's wife K. Rajammal. The songs provide tantalizing themes full of bhava and divine melody for Bharata Natya. It will indeed be a tribute to the stupendous vidwat of Bhagavatar too. Bhagavatar has given one L.P. and had visited Singapore.

The Paramacharyal of Kanchi had honoured Bhagavatar with the title of 'Krishna Bhaktamani'. Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar Trust honoured him posthumously. Madurai T.N. Seshagopalan gave a public concert at the Tamil Isai Sangham, Madras with Uthukadu songs alone drawing inspiration and guidance from V. Alamelu.

\* \* \*

### **T.R. KRISHNAMURTY - VOCALIST:**

**(b.1918)**

Born at Kollegal, of Ramamurthy who was in the State service and was a musician too, T.R. Krishnamurty had his training in music under Bhairavi Kempe Gowda, Violin Narayanaswamappa and T. Chowdiah. Has a pleasing and responding voice and is a traditionalist. He has been giving concerts in sabhas and on the All India Radio. Has been training many disciples like H.R. Sitarama Sastri.

\* \* \*

### **MYSORE KRISHNA AYYANGAR - VOCAL & MUSICAL DISCOURSER:**

**(20th Cent.)**

Son of Srinivasa Ayyangar, Krishna Ayyangar had his training under Krishna Rao, Chikka Rama Rao, Mysore Vasudevacharya and Bidaram Krishnappa - distinguished vocalists. For five decades Krishna Ayyangar has been giving vocal concerts and harikatha discourses. He established Sri Krishna Gayana Sabha. A popular vidwan known for his traditional presentation.

Publications	:	Dikshita kritis - Navavarana and Navagraha kritis. Tyagaraja Hrudaya.
Titles	:	Harikatha Visarada Kirtana Bhushana, etc.

\* \* \*

### **LALGUDI G.J.R. KRISHNAN - VIOLINIST:**

**(b.April 15, 1960)**

The Lalgudi Family is one of the few in Carnatic music which takes genuine pride as inheritors of a precious legacy and continuous dedication for generations to the classical art. The *paterfamilias* Rama Ayyar was a devoted disciple of Tyagarajah. Krishnan and Vijayalakshmi, son and daughter of Lalgudi Jayaraman, Violin maestro, are duo violinists who combine delightfully rendering melody more melodious. The magnitude of their intensive training, dedication and exquisite musical expression come to instant notice when they commence their concerts. The 'Lalgudi perfume' quite carefully filtered and invigorated by their stalwart father, and passed on to Krishnan, spreads its fragrance and the duo play to aesthetic perfection. Krishnan practically had all the gifts of gurukulavasa at home from birth and the father - aunt violin concerts

had come to stay since 1958 even before he was conceived.

Krishnan got an early start in his training at the tender age of five with his grandfather Lalgudi Gopala Ayyar and continued it with his father. Made his debut in 1973 providing violin support to his father. He is giving solo recitals, jugalbandhis and violin duets with his father or his sister. His style like his father's is the gayaka style closest to vocal rendition. His raga delineations are crisp and absorbing. Kriti rendition exhibits musical vigour and grace. Impeccable bowing and careful planning feature his concerts. Has been giving quite a large number of concerts in India and abroad.

### Concert tours:

With father Jayaraman: Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Italy, West Germany, U.K., U.S.A., USSR and Middle East. (Sister Vijayalakshmi joined in some.)

With sister Vijayalakshmi alone: USA.

### Honours and titles:

Best violinist Award by Music Academy, Madras	1986.
Yuva Kala Bharati by Bharat Kalachar	1987.

A Post-graduate in Commerce and a Cost & Works Accountant, Krishnan is an Executive Officer in an Investments Company and is a co-promoter of the vibrant organisation 'TYME' (Talented Youth for Musical Excellence). The author has a particular reason to thank Krishnan. He was delightfully surprised to receive a letter from Dr. Uma Roy, President, The Carnatic Music Association of North America Inc. mentioning *inter alia*:

'I was presented with your book *A Garland* by Lalgudi G.J.R. Krishnan and Lalgudi Vijayalakshmi... congratulate you on compiling an immense amount of material which is bound to be useful... seek your permission to use material from your book...'

CMANA has indeed shown much interest in the book and the credit goes naturally to Krishnan-Vijayalakshmi who thoughtfully took the book on the eve of their departure and presented it to the President of a vibrant association in the states.

\* \* \*

### MADURAI N. KRISHNAN - VOCALIST:

(b. 1928)

Place of birth	:	Madurai
Parentage	:	Narayana Ayyangar and Padmasini
Musical heritage	:	Father is a musical discourser and scholar in sanskrit and tamil.

Elder brother, Srinivasa Ayyangar is a violinist.

Madurai Krishna Ayyangar, percussionist (b.1927), who studied under Jalatarangam Babu Ayyangar is a cousin.

Madurai Srinivasa Ayyangar, another cousin, is a violinist.

Musical training : Preliminary training under father and elder brother.  
Training in the Tamil Isai School at Karaikudi  
Sangita Vidwan Diploma from the Government Music College, Madras.

To crown the multi-sided heritage, musical environment and training, he entered on gurukulavasa under the celebrated Ariyakudi Ramanuja Ayyangar which lasted till the death of the guru on 23.01.1967. Eighteen years' of training is something remarkable. The earth (guru) was not inclined to sever its connection with the tree (pupil) and the tree believed that such severance was no freedom to it! (Tagore's epigram). Madurai Krishnan made his debut at Tirupati in 1950 and has since given hundreds of concerts all over India on the Radio, Doordarshan and elsewhere. The traditional training and background and the long association with a great master have endowed his music with a distinct stamp. Krishnan enjoys a rich voice. He recollects with pride the incident when he was called upon by Ramanuja Ayyangar to take the concert when the latter got suddenly indisposed. With stalwarts T.N. Krishnan on violin and Palghat Mani Ayyar on mridangam, young Krishnan stole the honours of the day.

He has given swara notation to the songs of *Tiruppavai*, some pasurams of *Nalayira Divya Prabandham*, besides songs of Bharati and Ambhujam Krishna. His earlier training at a Tamil Isai School should have helped him in this. Has composed padams, varnams, tillanas and jatiswarams which are adopted by bharatanatyam artistes. He is the Director of Sree Bharathalaya, Madras with which the celebrated artist Sudharani Raghupati is connected. Has produced musical plays like 'Krishna Leela' and 'Mathuriyam'. His mature musicianship now follows *Natya Sastra* concept of music being an aid to natya.

Titles & Honours	:	Gana Nidhi from Vaishnava Association -	1979.
		Madura Kala Praveen from Satguru	
		Sangeetha Samajam	- 1981.
		Honoured by the Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai	
		Nataka Mandram	- 1982.
		Sangeet Natak Academy Award	- 1988.
		Padma Sri by President of India	- 1992.

\* \* \*

### **NAMAGIRIPETTAI KRISHNAN - NAGASWARA MAESTRO:(b. April 2, 1924)**

One of the renowned nagaswara vidwans of the present enjoying wide popularity, large practice and immense prestige, Namagiripettai Krishnan is the son and disciple of Kathan. He underwent further training with Ganesan of

Aruppukottai from the age of fourteen and cherishes sweet memories of his apprenticeship. The teacher would give lessons only in fits and starts and would stop abruptly too. His mother's name is Kunjammal; one of his brothers is a percussionist (tavil) while another, Murugan is his co-player.

Krishnan during his visits abroad for concerts had an interesting experience too. At Paris, the host, who presented him with a costly shawl at a reception, came to him after the function and requested for its return stating that he had been using the shawl for very many such functions -social, cultural and political. Puzzled and intrigued at the hypocritical farce and un-Indian practice, he silently returned it ! Perhaps alluding to occasional experiments by some artistes with mridangam, he says that nagaswaram and tavil are inseparable twins like Siva-Sakti unity. He knows to play on violin too. He is the accredited vidwan to the Tirumalai Tirupati Devasthanams. He has played on nagaswaram for many films.

### Honours & Titles:

Sangeet Natak Akademy Award.	1981
'Isai Perarasu' by Tamilsai Sangham	1983-84
Saptagiri Sangita Vidwanmani by Tyagaraja Trust, Tirupati	1992

Has been honoured with many other titles like 'Inkuzhal Isai Arasu', 'Nagaswara Isai Mannar', 'Perunguzhal Pulavar Mani' and a Doctorate (one of the three nagaswara vidwans who enjoy this honour now).

\* \* \*

### PATHAMADAI S. KRISHNAN - MUSICIAN :

(20th Century)

A distant relative of Subramanya Bharati and Ettayapuram Ramachandra Bhagavatar, guru to Pushpavanam, Krishnan carries the honorifics *Sangitaramya Kokilam* and *Sangita Sahitya Vidwan*. He brought out a book containing Bharati's songs titled '*Bharatiyar Padalgal*' in tamil.

\* \* \* \* \*

### Farewell

Tyagaraja heard the song '*Paramatmudu*' (*Vagadeeswari*) before attaining eternity, while Muthuswami Dikshitar discarded his mortal coil as he was hearing '*Meenalochani Pasamochani*' - *Meenakshi* (*Gamakakriya*). Many illustrious musicians left in peace diluting their earthly existence in divine songs of their liking. Sangameswara Sastri died playing *Ananda Bhairavi* on veena. James H. Cousins wrote to Rukmini Devi Arundale that Tiger Varadachariar wanted to be sung to as his end was nearing. He was engulfed in bhajan till the flames engulfed his mortal remains.

\* \* \*

**PROF. T.N. KRISHNAN - VIOLIN VIRTUOSO:****(b.October 16, 1926)**

'Now loudly let the viol sound;  
The lute send out its voice with might.' — (XCII. *Atharva Veda*)

There is vibrant, emotional warmth, technical precision and perfection in his delightful melodic rendition. The serenity and tonal virtuosity are soothing and endearing. Evocative improvisation and nuances, tantalizing subtlety with clarity providing absorbing interest in the listener mark his concerts. His impeccable smooth bowing blends severe classicism with depth and fluency with polish. SVK once noted, 'his notes glisten with Carnatic lustre and every phrase in the alapana stands dipped with Carnatic sweetness. The use of the full bow produces deep-toned music enriched with gamakas with resultant grandeur and grace'. Above all, there is his dignified presence on the stage free from any tinge of mannerism, exuding confidence, cultured decorum and robust refinement, a personification of perfected knowledge. This is Prof. T.N. Krishnan, formerly Principal, Central College of Carnatic Music, Madras and now Head of the Department of Carnatic Music, University of Delhi.

Born at Parur as the eldest son of Narayana Ayyar and Narayani Ammal, T.N. Krishnan had his initial training in music under his father and later with K. Parthasarathy Ayyangar and Dr. Semmangudi Srinivasa Ayyar, to whom alone the distinguished professor provided accompaniment long after he switched over to solos as a mark of his respect. Krishnan drew inspiration from the play of the renowned violinist of yester years, Papa Venkataramaiah in 'shaping his aesthetically rich and pregnantly gamaka-laden style'. His innate genius expressed itself very early and he commenced giving accompaniment from the age of ten. He became popular quite soon and an incident could be quoted in this connection. Guru Srinivasa Ayyar was giving his concert at the Hindu High School, Triplicane in the forties probably for the Parthasarathy Swami Sabha. Exhilarating rendition by tender-aged Krishnan thrilled the audience and evoked frequent applause. The vocalist guru intervened to say that while appreciation would do good, lavish presents of the same might mar the career of his young ward as he was then at an impressionable stage of development. The admiring audience understood and checked its emotional propensity. It may be mentioned that in those days applause was EARNED and reserved only for the very best rendition and that the present practice of applauding every phrase and every time as in tennis courts had not invaded the concert halls.

Prof. Krishnan has robust views on current trends in the music world. Says he:

'I look forward to anything innovative in music, because variety is the need of the day...Listeners welcome change. It is a challenge and only enriches traditional music when new areas are explored and styles tried out. In fact I play Western pieces in my concerts sometimes... Thinking should not stagnate.'



It should not be thought that the Professor has given a *carte blanche* to practitioners. He, actually, insists on conscious efforts at innovative exploration in full knowledge of what one seeks after and how. Here is the rider to his observations which by themselves would be termed revolutionary in conservative circles:

'There is only one thing, however, which is that the young should also be sufficiently educated about the traditions they inherit and the conventions they break.'

Prof. T.N. Krishnan has made his enlightening clarification at the Talavadyotsav '92 at Bangalore in the presence of a large number of artistes:

"Musicians should get away from the habit of singing a large number of compositions mechanically, but using the songs as the bases, seek to project the image of their ragas. I am adopting this approach in my solo recitals and probably due to it, they attract North Indian listeners in large numbers to my concerts."

In the context of the need for some reorientation to revitalise Carnatic music to involve greater audience receptivity and Prof. Krishnan's learned observations, the following statement of Georges Enesco, Yehudi Menuhin's master, may be found interesting:

'Virtuosos ! Poor devils ! They are just like convicts (condemned to hard labour), martyrs... some times saints...'

(It should be noted that Yehudi Menuhin had great regard to Enesco and said, 'Everything I do carries his imprint'.)

In Indian music, T.N. Krishnan refers to jugalbandi among areas where new techniques can be tried. He says:

'I have played with Pandit Ramnarayan sarangi, Ustad Amjad Ali Khan sarod, Pandit Hari Prasad Chaurasia flute, Debu Chaudhury sitar and my own sister Rajam who plays Hindustani music on violin. In the Carnatic tradition I have played with Doreswami Ayyangar veena. I have enjoyed these..particularly with the sitar and sarod...There is a better synthesis between the plucked instrument and the bowed ones perhaps because of the variety it offers.'

He has a note of caution to artistes performing in jugalbandis that it is important that each should keep to his style and not cross territories in which case it could be disastrous. 'I am not against jugalbandis. People like it. Of course, due concentration and effort to bring out the salient features should be there.'

## Honours & Titles:

Tenali Sangeetha Sabha  
Music Academy, Madras  
President of India

Vayuleena Ratna  
Sangita Kalanidhi  
Padma Sri

1950  
1980

Sangit Natak Academy, Delhi	Award	1974
Karur Sangeetha Sabha	Honours	
Ganapathy Sacchitananda Sabha, Bangalore	Violin Ratna	
Tantri Vilas		
Sankaracharya of Kanchi Mutt	Honours	1980
Mylapore Fine Arts	Sangita Kala Nipuna	
The Academy of Music, Bangalore	Chowdiah Memorial National Level Award	1983
TTD Devasthanams.	Asthana Vidwan	1977
Kalasagaram, Secunderabad	Kalasagara	1991
President of India	Padma Bhushan	1992
Sunada Tantri Vinodaka	Srimad Andavan Swamigal	1992
Saptagiri Sangita Vidwananmani	Tyagaraja Trust, Tirupati	1992

## Concert Tours:

United States of America (8 times)  
 United Kingdom  
 Australia to preside over the Asian Music Symposium sponsored by the Australian  
 Society for Indian Music, Sydney - 1979.  
 USSR, Singapore, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, etc.

## Posts Held:

Professor of Violin, Tamil Nadu Government Music College	- 1964- 1978.
Principal, Tamil Nadu Govt. Music College, Madras	- 1978-1985.
Head of Carnatic Music Section, Faculty of Music and Fine Arts, Delhi University	- 1986 onwards.
Vice Chairman, Sangeet Natak Academy, Delhi	- 1992 onwards

T.N. Krishnan has occupied several other important assignments such as –

Chairman, Audition Board, Sri Lankan Broadcasting Corporation  
 (deputed by AIR, New Delhi).  
 Member, Board of Examiners of some Universities.  
 Member, Experts Committee, Music Academy, Madras.  
 Executive Board Member, Sangeet Natak Academy, Delhi (two terms)  
 Visiting Professor, Centre for World Music, Berkeley, USA.

## Disc Recordings: Quite a number.

A child prodigy T.N. Krishnan hails from a musical family. Apart from his father—guru, his grandfather Appadurai Bhagavatar of Tiruppunithura was a musician. His sister Dr. N. Rajam, an eminent violinist and SNA award winner, is the Head of Department and Dean, Faculty of Arts, Benares University. Daughter Viji Krishnan and son Sriram often accompany their father on violin in his solos. He had the opportunity to provide accompaniment while quite young to eminent stalwarts of the day like Ariyakudi Ramanuja Ayyangar and Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar and was on the All India Radio at the age of ten.

There was an element of drama in the Music Academy conferring the prestigious title of 'Sangita Kalanidhi' on him in 1980. For the first time, some members of the Experts Committee, which was then in charge of choosing the candidate, are stated to have gone around collecting signatures for another artiste. Suddenly a concerted pincer movement was set in motion and Prof. T.N. Krishnan carried the day in the ballot and was selected. It was perhaps the solitary occasion when the ballot settled the issue!

Prof. Krishnan enjoys a reputation for virtuosity and thrilling classical rendition. An Award rightly describes that 'in his hands, the instrument exudes a sweet tonal quality which imparts an indefinable charm to his playing. His performance style is closely modelled on vocal music'. The *nadha* that he produces from violin is *suswara* incarnate. While felicitating T.N. Krishnan, C.V. Narasimhan mentioned on 13.07.1992 that the celebrated violinist had provided accompaniment to his vocal concerts and humourously added that they were cases of the tail wagging the dog. He said:

'What moves you and touches your heart is *Suswaram* ; and Krishnan is an embodiment of *Suswaram*. When he touches the shadja, it is ambrosial *suswaram*.'

Prof. Krishnan is presently Vice-Chairman, Sangeet Natak Akademy, Delhi and it is hoped that he could find time to give the benefit of his rich, varied and weighty experience to guide the affairs of that premier institution.

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## **BIDARAM KRISHNAPPA - VOCAL MAESTRO:**

**(1866 - 1931)**

An account of the life of Bidaram Krishnappa, one of the finest of musicians who adorned the musical horizon in Karnataka, finds place at pages 131-132 of *A Garland*. Additional details are furnished hereunder.

### **Distress while young:**

Young Krishnappa came home crying for food. Drowpati of *Mahabharata* had by chance left a particle of food in the vessel for Krishna to stifle Sage Durvasa's hunger and prevent a catastrophe. But poor Saraswati's lot did not enjoy even that much of blessedness and her Krishnappa was no Krishna either to invoke divine powers! She shed copious tears of grief. The lad ran to the nearby Anjaneya temple and dozed off singing Devaranamas on an empty stomach. Dr. Nanjundiah who chanced to see him gave him a rupee. The boy would go over there and earn a little by singing daily.

Fortune dawned when sahuakar Thimmayya heard him and was impressed by his music and personality. He was struck by the pathetic lot of Krishnappa, took him to Karur Ramaswamy, a musician and told him :

'Well, you must teach this boy music. Pray accept this hundred rupees now. Fix up the nearest auspicious day and commence the tuitions. Let it be my responsibility to see that your efforts do not go without a reward.'

It was a magnificent gesture which placed him on the sure path to ultimate glory. Krishnappa never forgot his distress later and devoted three-fourths of his time to teach his disciples passionately. 'Let them not suffer that ordeal that had been my fate before', he believed. Probably that was the reason why he was harsh to Chowdiah having found in him a worthy violin wizard-in-the-making.

### Elephantine bluff:

An interesting incident involves both Krishnappa who has done real acting and Mysore Vasudevacharya. The circus elephant walks on two legs and when the circus-master turns his back, the mammal resumes to walk on all fours to the amusement of the gazers. Krishnappa and Vasudevacharya had to enact a like drama to throw dust in the eyes of their patron Maharajah of Mysore to cover up their ignorance! It was float festival on Chamundi Hills. The ruler asked them to sing the Dikshitar kirtana '*Mahishasuramardini*' (*Narayani*). Here is the account of what transpired in Vasudeva's words:

'Neither of us knew the kirtana. Dodda Venkataramaniah, violinist knew the trend of the pallavi alone and sang it for us. Oh! that was enough! When the float moved away from the bank where His Highness was seated, we mugged up the pallavi of the kirtana. As the float neared him, we started singing kalpana swaras to the pallavi - one avarta each. When the float drifted away from him, we kept quiet! God spared us!'

How effective was the succour of God?

'Next day, His Highness called us both and said, "You sang the pallavi of the kirtana excellently. But we should like to hear the full song as well. Please learn it fully and sing day after tomorrow!" His Highness smiled knowledgeably and our pale faces managed to put on an artificial smile!'

### The man:

His recital in the temple at T.Narasipur did not gather momentum. He was visibly uncomfortable. An old admirer fathomed the reason for the lack of warmth in his singing and held out a pinch of snuff in the most professional manner. Krishnappa's face brightened. Immediately self-respect and concert decorum intervened and asserted to annihilate the temptation and Krishnappa said, 'Kindly excuse me, Sir. I have given up snuff'.

And it was not a statement of the occasion. To live up to the averment, he snuffed it out of his life! That was the man and his tenacious character. (But that did not lead to fluctuations in the snuff-market! Semmangudi Srinivasa Ayyar, the vocal maestro stepped in to use snuff to clear his nasal obstructions!)

**Unrealised wish:**

Krishnappa cherished a wish to go abroad to exhibit his expertise and the charm of Carnatic Music. Astrologers assured him of splendid chances. He died on July 29, 1931 with his unrealised wish cremated with him! A most colourful personality, Krishnappa strode through the streets for a copper while young as a child of poverty and neglect but lived to be a Caesar, a colossus among musicians and admirers.

\* \* \*

**N.S. KRISHNASWAMY AYYANGAR - VOCALIST: (b. January 31, 1914)**

A distinguished disciple of Kanchipuram Naina Pillai and Tiger Varadachariar, Krishnaswamy Ayyangar learnt raga alapana, etc., by following Naina Pillai to his concerts. He was voice - support at many of his guru's performances. Asampradaya vidwan, he used to present at each of his concerts at least one new song and a rare raga. Was on the teaching staff of Kalakshetra. A respected senior vidwan, he is known for presenting traditional aesthetics of ragas and his raga alapanas are rich and comprehensive.

\* \* \*

**MAHARANA KUMBHA (KUMBHAKARNA) - MUSICOLOGIST: (1433 - 1468)**

An illustrious ruler of Mewar, Maharana Kumbha ascended the throne on the assassination of his father Mokul. He belonged to one of the foremost celebrated royal families of Rajasthan and is a historic figure in the annals of Rajasthan. Tilhabhatta was his preceptor. A Saivite, he was very tolerant. He has authored quite a number of works like

*Rasikha Priya*, a commentary on *Gita Govinda*,  
*Rasaratnakosa*,  
*Sangitakrama Dipika*, and  
*Sangita Mimamsa* or *Sangita Raja*.

The work *Sangita Raja* is perfect in its exposition and elucidation of intricate musical problems and is remarkable for its wealth of details and illustration, says Dr. Prem Lata Sharma who has edited the work for the Benares Hindu University (published in 1963). The work is mutilated in parts and, as usual with such great works, some credit an unknown Kalasena with its authorship. The great cultured scholar-king had sifted traditional materials critically and has intelligently utilised them. His style is expository and disputatious. 'The conception of the plan of the work is original and grand. His theories and concepts are traditional.' *Sangita Raja* is an encyclopaedic work on the science of music, dance, musical instruments, theory of rasa, etc. in five khandas containing 16000

sloka-measures. It is a matter for regret that the remarkable work was in the dark robbing it of its merit and use for five centuries.

It is said that the name 'Kumbhakarna' carried no wrong attributes with it in the past. Maharana Kumbha enjoyed titles like Chapguru, Todarmal and Abhinava Battacharya.

\* \* \*

## **S.R. KUPPUSWAMY - MUSICOLOGIST:**

**(b. September 27, 1914)**

Place of birth	:	Ayyampettai near Tanjore
Parents	:	Ranganatha Ayyangar & Ranganayaki.
General Qualification	:	Graduate of the Madras University
Musical Training and qualification	:	Learnt Carnatic music under Eddu Ramudu Bhagavata, a direct disciple of Tyagarajah.
		Learnt Hindustani music from S.N. Bhattacharya of the Benares University.
		Master of Music degree from U.S.A.
		Sangeethacharya degree from All India Vidwat Sammelan, Aligarh University in 1951.
Posts held	:	Lecturer in Music at the Arts College, Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya, Perianaickenpalayam.
		Research Student in Music, Madras University.
		Examiner for Music Examinations held by the All India Vidwat Sammelan.
		Member, Local Audition and Advisory Committees, All India Radio, Coimbatore.

### **Journals edited:**

Karnataka Sangeetham, a monthly music journal and Tamilisai, a monthly journal.

S.R. Kuppuswami was very active in the music world and his activities were multi-sided. He had conducted research studies on the importance of music in ancient tamil and sanskrit literature and had participated in vocal programmes and talks on music. Has composed songs in sanskrit with swara notation. The two journals he edited were popular.

### **Publications:**

A Short Survey of Music of North and South India (1947) and Noodhana Tamil Sahityangal. S.R. Kuppuswami hopes his script on 'Music in the days of Kalidasa' will soon be published.

**Title:** Karnataka Sangeetha Mani by the Meikandar Kazhagam, Coimbatore.

\* \* \*

# L

## ADYAR K. LAKSHMANAN - MULTI - FACETED ARTISTE:

(b.December 16, 1933)

Adyar Lakshmanan is a fine specimen of ' *Sangeetha* ' of *Natya Sastra* connotation in combining vocal music with mridangam and bharata natyam - each with true merit and knowledgeable grace. Kalakshetra moulded him to flower into a complete and comprehensive artiste who gives vocal concerts, takes part in dance-dramas, trains quite a number in bharata natyam, etc. He is a vocalist, dance artiste, mridangist and nattuvangam all in one. He has taken a major part in the famous dance-dramas of Kalakshetra along with the celebrated Dr. Rukmini Devi, its founder and under her direction. Apart from providing *nattuvangam* to his own patron-tutor Rukmini Devi, he has provided *nattuvangam* practically to the entire galaxy of dancers who adorn the stage.

Place of birth	:	Kuppam (Andhra Pradesh)	
Parents	:	N. Krishnaraja Rao & Godhavati Bai	
Qualification	:	Matriculation Higher Grade Exam in Carnatic Music of the T.N. Directorate of Technical Education. Diploma in Bharata Natyam & Mridangam from Kalakshetra in 1954. Post-graduate Diploma in Nattuvangam from Kalakshetra in 1964.	
Teachers for vocal music	:	Visweswaraiyah of Tiptur, The galaxy of musicians who were at Kalakshetra like the Tiger, Mudicondan, Budalur and Vasudevachar.	
Training in Bharatanatyam	:	Rukmini Devi Arundale, Saradamba Ammal, etc.	
Training in Mridangam	:	Vittal Ayyar & Karaikudi Muthu Ayyar.	

He had intensive training in nattuvangam and kathakali and rich experience even while he remained with Kalakshetra. Was teacher for music, bharata natyam and mridangam in it and Chief Instructor, Natyalaya, Madras. Presently he is Director of 'Bharata Choodamani' founded in 1969 by him which throbs with the fragrance of the graceful art.

### Concert tours :

USSR, Europe, USA, Australia, Sri Lanka,  
Singapore, Malaysia, Pakistan, Guyana.  
Africa is the one continent he is yet to grace.

## Honours & Titles :

UNESCO Mandram Award for nattuvangam & brilliant compositions	1970.
Kalaimamani by T.N. Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram	1981.
Padma Sri by the President of India	1989.
Sangeet Natak Akademi Award	1991.
(besides other titles)	

\* \* \*

**T. LAKSHMANA PILLAI - MUSICOLOGIST/COMPOSER:** (May 3, 1864 - July 23, 1950)

### The Man:

Known for his high integrity and honesty, modesty and methodicity T. Lakshmana Pillai was a bridge between malayalam and tamil, east and west. A graduate in arts, he was religious; was a thinker and humanist. Dr. S. Venkatasubramonia Ayyar mentions that Lakshmana Pillai was a sensitive poet and a serious moralist, that he was a stickler for tradition and a musicologist of merit. Was a strict vegetarian and was a respected figure in Kerala and Tamil Nadu. His house buzzed with the visits of eminent men and women like Rabhindranath Tagore, Sarojini Naidu and Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar. His ancestors hailed from Tiruchendur.

Place of birth	:	Trivandrum
Parents	:	Thiraviam Pillai and Valliammal (Balaramavalli)
Musical training under	:	Pappu Pillai (a Nair who commanded an impressive voice and who was a terror to other musicians for his aggressive rendition), Velu Pillai and Picchu Bhagavatar. Sathu Bhagavatar was an inspiration to him.

### Occupation :

Service and 'Nadopasana' ran concurrently in his life. Was in the Travancore Accounts Service and was a Major Treasury Officer last. If he accounted for funds in office, he accounted for musicians and composers, ragas and swaras at home. In integrity and devotion to music, he had his peer in Vedanayakam Pillai (1826-1889) but while Vedanayakam Pillai had a tumultuous career in office, Lakshmana Pillai's was like the deltaic river running to its brim, smooth, majestic and unchallenged. Both were scholars in tamil and eminent composers.

### The Musician:

Lakshmana Pillai had a good voice and when his voice failed in 1915, he had to depend on veena for musical exploration and expression. He had his mentor in M. Seshagiri Sastry too and paid heed to his advice to avoid excessive trills. Sastry told him :



' Ravais (trills) should find a place in songs only as a diamond in a necklace. Diamonds should be used sparingly for artistic effect and they should be set off by gems of other colours to relieve monotony of too many diamonds. '

### The Composer:

The sincerity and integrity of Lakshmana Pillai will be seen in his writings. He shares his rich experience when he writes :

' I wanted to compose a song in *Todi* but all my new ideas seemed to resemble one or the other of Tyagaraja's who seemed to have exhausted all the potentialities of the raga ! I gave up the attempt in **despair**. Later, after six months, a strain occurred all of a sudden of *Todi* without *Panchama*...'

His 202 songs 'possess rich imagination, new thoughts and lofty ideas' — (Dr. U.Ve. Swaminatha Ayyar). He composed songs in chaste tamil on ethical, devotional and philosophical themes, mostly in *rakti* ragas and demonstrated that tamil as a language is as good as any other for lyrics. He was the first to compose in raga '*Amarasena Priya*' - a janya of Nitimati (60th mela), reportedly named after the philosopher Emerson. All his songs with notation and essays have been published. Swara notation was done by him, his daughter and disciples. His daughter Lakshmi Narayanan Nair, Professor of Music, Women's College, Trivandrum, Gayanapatu Kirthanapatu C. Saraswati Bai, Ranganatha Ayyar, N.C. Vasantakokilam and Padmanabha Ayyangar were among his distinguished disciples. Veteran M.S. Ramaswamy Ayyar called him ' Tamil Tyagaraja '.

A musicologist of eminence, he published in 1918 a volume of essays on a variety of subjects. His rich, analytic, imaginative mind identified the finer characteristics of ragas thus:

Todi	:	Represent the majesty of a stately king parading his
Bhairavi	:	pomp, glory and his lofty passions - a grand and sub-
	:	lime spectacle.
Keeravani	:	Project the serene and subdued life of a sage in a lonely
Vasanta	:	forest contemplating the universe.
Mohanam	:	Suggest a coy maiden hiding her lover as a rose does
Poorvikalyani	:	its blooming petals beneath its bower of green.
Huseni	:	Fascinating for its sadness, like a maiden estranged
Nagaswarali	:	from her lover.
Begada	:	Argues, resents and remonstrates.
Nadanamakriya	:	Calm, thoughtful like a philosopher.
Neelambari	:	Submissive and imploring, melting into streams of
Kambhoji	:	tender devotion with prayers and tears.

'Each raga comes and goes with its store of smiles and tears, passion or pathos, its noble and lofty impulses and leaves its mark on the susceptible mind.'

## Honours & Titles :

Tamil Kavi Arasu  
Sangita Kala Sikhamani  
Member, Travancore Legislative Assembly.

by Annamalai University.  
by admirers.

Lakshmana Pillai's writings bring to focus the musical heritage of the South, more particularly of Travancore, and the lives of many great men who would have been forgotten but for him. He was a musicologist and composer of eminence. T.L. Venkatarama Ayyar identifies him as a pioneer composer of tamil songs fulfilling the requirements of classicism and the demands of concerts.

'We have keerthanas of the classical type by Papanasam Sivan and Kotiswara Iyer; but the compositions of Pillai date back to 1893 long before the present renaissance in classical tamil music and Pillai can well claim to the first in the field.' — (T.L.V.)

Lakshmana Pillai was a gentleman to his fingertips, a tamil scholar, poet, composer, essayist and a pioneer in various fields. His sane views on Tamil Isai (extracted in Part I) are commendable.

\* \* \*

## P.S. LAKSHMI - GOTTUVADYAM ARTISTE

(b.November 29,1925)

Place of birth :	Tirupati
Parents :	Chivukula Subramanyam - Subbaratnamma
Training in music :	Under Balakrishnaiah, violinist.
Debut in :	1947 - Prize-winner for violin recital at the Music Academy, M.S. Gopalakrishnan being the other prize-winner then.

As a violinist, she has been accompanying artistes on the All India Radio and at sabhas. Since 1949, she switched over to gottuvadyam, convinced of its appeal when she heard Mannargudi Savitri Ammal on the instrument. She has been giving gottuvadyam performances since then.

Lakshmi celebrates the 'monthly Panchami' festival for Tyagaraja. At the Annamacharya festivals at Tirupati, she has been giving vocal concerts with her sister, C. Indramani. Thus P.S. Lakshmi enjoys the unique distinction of being a vocalist, violinist and a gottuvadyam artiste.

\* \* \*

**PALANI S. LAKSHMINARASIMHA IYER - NAGASWARA ARTISTE:****(b.: c.1940)**

Place of birth : Sikkil, a pilgrim centre.  
 Parents : N.Srinivasa Sastrigal & Kamakshi Ammal.

On his mother's side, Lakshminarasimha Iyer is a scion of the family of the celebrated Uthukadu Venkatasubba Ayyar and quite fittingly had his musical training during 1950-58 with his uncle Needamangalam Krishnamoorthy Bhagavatar who popularised the songs of his ancestor. Lakshminarasimha learnt both vocal and flute. His musical appetite longed for something unique. During 1960-66, he had training in nagaswaram with Kivalur N.G. Ganesa Pillai. On completion of his training, he found it difficult to play on nagaswaram with his guru in the alluvial Cauvery delta owing to social antipathy to a brahmin playing on nagaswaram - quite an unheard of event. Kuringi may flower; Mahamakham and Maha Mela may be celebrated - all once in twelve years. But a brahmin to play on nagaswaram is an event of a century ! So Iyer had to shift to the more congenial hilly tract of Palani since the presiding deity there, Lord Dandayuthapani raised little objection to a brahmin playing on nagaswaram since He himself has settled there as a recluse embittered at the loss of a fruit in a battle of wits with his intellectual elder, Lord Ganesha !

Iyer had been giving concerts having made his debut at the Krishna Gana Sabha, T. Nagar followed by three hundred concerts at different centres and sabhas all over India. He has been a music teacher at the Ghatam Krishnayyar Music School, A. Kalayamputhur, Palani for the last two and a half decades. A traditionalist, he has come up for praise by critics and music lovers.

Honours & Titles : Swami Haridhos Giri appointed him as the Asthana Vidwan of Sri Gnananandha Swamigal Mutt in 1974.  
 Nagaswara Surabhi by Sri Nagaswarali Sabha on 25.11.1982.  
 Nagaswara Jyothi by Swami Haridhos Giri on 31.12.1982.  
 Honoured by the Kanchi Kamakoti and Sringeri Sankaracharyas.  
 Concert tours : Malaysia and Singapore in 1984.

Disc recordings :

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**VAIRAMANGALAM LAKSHMINARAYANAN - VOCALIST: (b.Octr. 13, 1928)**

Born : at Vairamangalam.  
 Studied upto : S.S.L.C. at Madras and Tanjore.

Musically inclined, he took part in school competitions in music and drama with credit. In 1948, he joined as a disciple with the late Kalaimamani T.K. Rangachari and was with him as his voice- support for long. Made his debut at Tanjore at the celebrated Bangaru Kamakshi Amman temple with which Syama Sastri of the Trinity was connected. Lakshminarayanan has received awards from the Music Academy in 1973 and 1981 and has been giving concerts since 1955 on the All India Radio and at sabhas.

He is also a lecturer (part-time) in Kalakshetra and is noted for his crisp presentation and satisfying voice.

Concert tour : USA and Canada 1987.

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### **LAKSHMIRATNAMMAL - VOCALIST: (c.1888 - July 29, 1940)**

Daughter of Veenai Dhanammal and younger of the Dhanam Sisters, (the elder being Rajalakshmi), Lakshmiratnammal was a specialist in padams and javalis. Since the house of Dhanam was the favourite haunt of musicians for long, Lakshmiratnammal had her training not only under her illustrious mother but also under Tiger Varadachariar, Puli yodara i Krishnamachariar, Mysore Krishna Ayyangar, Pattabhiramiah and Dharmapuri Subbarayar, the last of whom was a great admirer of Dhanammal. Learnt Hindustani music from the celebrated Khan Saheb Abdul Karim Khan. She sang for Mylapore Gowri Ammal's bharata natyam also. She was carried away by the floods in the Cauvery during the Aradhana at Tiruvaiyaru in 1937 but thanks to two musicians, she was saved. She took part in all the festivals and commanded respect from the public and musicians.

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### **LUDWIG PESCH - FLAUTIST: (b.1955)**

123 years after Johann Wolfgang von Goethe left, Ludwig Pesch was born at Bruchael in the then West Germany probably to give a reorientation to East-West Musical Synthesis. He has an irrepressible will to succeed in endeavours on unbeaten paths. He is no idle adulator but is an action- oriented pioneer in the field of music and culture.

His '*Raga Dhana*' or Practical Guide to Karnatic Ragas (1986) is a compact compilation of the raga lakshanas of 316 Carnatic ragas to trace mela and janya ragas using a number system for enlightenment on the arohana and avarohana. This pocket guide is informative to all.

Pesch was a co-sponsor of 'Sampradaya', a thriving, throbbing centre at Madras for music traditions of South India. The centre, started in 1986,

compiles, records, documents and propagates musical traditions which are personality-oriented. It is open to the public for reading and hearing recorded songs, interviews, etc., which are all very valuable. It also propagates chamber music without amplification. The project is unique and is well conceived for the promotion of chaste classical music and preservation of the rendition of great masters.

Yet another landmark at Madras owes its existence to Pesch. It is the 'Sittarangam', the Small Theatre Madras (1987). Artistically designed, it is simple, traditional and inspired by temple halls and descriptions in *Natya Sastra*. It is described as a 'hermitage of monastic simplicity and beauty'. This mini-theatre was got up by Pesch with the technical support of his friend, Dehghan.

A guide, an institution and a mini theatre are solid achievements but they do not exhaust his advent. He has become a competent and complete classical Carnatic flautist who has drawn praise from the media and the public. His rendition is chaste and captivating and brings out the bhava and rasa of the sahitya (text). He has given quite a number of concerts in India and abroad drawing copious encomia. If Jon Higgins, the vocalist came from the States, Pesch, the flautist has come from Germany. Pesch is a disciple of veteran H. Ramachandra Sastri of Kalakshetra, Madras where he got a First Class Diploma and did his post-graduate studies. Earlier he had his studies in Western music at Freiburg Musikhochschule and University. In 1981 he made his debut as support flautist to guru H. Ramachandra Sastri and soon started giving independent performances too. It is a tribute to the intense dedication and robust culture of Pesch who came to India as a stranger with nothing but love of Indian music, a passion to master it and a will to make an impressive grade too. He was not content to be a mere 'also-ran'. Young Pesch has done extensive photographic documentation of traditional South Indian music in its cultural contexts availing of the assistance of ICCR, DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) and International Lalit Kala Foundation, Santa Barbara, USA. He is an active cultural ambassador who has emotionally integrated himself to the pristine glories and traditions of South Indian music and is now a golden link with the West.

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#### **LOKA NARAYANA SASTRI - MUSICIAN:**

A disciple of Wallajahpet Venkataramana Bhagavatar, Narayana Sastri is credited with the pioneering publication of Tyagaraja's operas.

# M

## MADURA KAVI BHARATI -

(died 1806)

Son of Ganapati Subbayyar, Madura Kavi Bharati hailed from Perungarai in Ramnad District, a bee-hive of eminent composers in tamil like Kavi Kunjara Bharati and Kotiswara Ayyar who composed the 72 melakarta raga songs. Madura Kavi had inspired Kunjara Bharati in his poetical pursuits. His puissant genius was recognised by the Raja of Ramnad and the title 'Madura Kavi' (Honeyed Poet) conferred by him.

\* \* \*

## C.M. MADURANATH - FLAUTIST:

(20th Century)

Maduranath is one of the performing flautists of Karnataka in traditional style. He had the good fortune of learning under the celebrated T.R. Mahalingam (Mali) and pursues his style of rendition. Hails from Tumkur, a prominent town in Karnataka. Leading artistes have provided accompaniment to Maduranath. He runs a music school at Bangalore specifically to train flautists.

Concert tour:

Europe

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## T.R. MAHALINGAM (alias MALI) - FLUTE PRODIGY:

(Novr.6, 1926 -  
May 31, 1986)

It is the privilege and sagacity of a chosen few to conjure up grand classical visions of supreme sublimity presenting beauteous graces and portraying graceful beauty. They open up magnificent vistas of art, enchant the *congnoscenti* and the lay. The spell outlasts their periods of glory and fame. Sarabha, the flautist, Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar and Pushpavanam, the vocalists, T.N. Rajarathinam, the nagaswara player and S.G. Kittappa, the dramatist are specimens of this legendary galaxy. To this aristocracy of art belongs T.R. Mahalingam, popularly called Mali. When Sarabha left after two and thirty years in 1904, there was a vacuum with Palladam Sanjiva Rao and others holding charge. It was left to Talagnayar in Tanjore district to present after the lapse of two decades a flute prodigy who staged a quick and massive presence, plundered the hearts of music-lovers and looted all praise! His debut was immediate in 1933 at the age of seven at the Tyagaraja Festival, Mylapore. Like the eastern sun which shoots out *sans* twilight on the Marina, there was no period of apprenticeship or vegetating. The lad came with his magician's play on the bamboo flute and was crowned king!

His exhilarating flute-play dwarfed the mature, sedate play of Palladam Sanjiva Rao, who, incidentally, did not evince interest earlier in taking the boy as his ward. There is no account of Mali following the footprints of Ekalavya but like Uthukadu Venkatasubba Ayyar, he was his own master - with the difference that Mali could not emulate the Uthukadu pattern of sublime private life! Music-lovers thronged Mali's concerts. An *eka santha grahi*, he saw the contours of raga shapes on the horizon and developed his play pouring out enchanting, titillating alapanas and swaras with the support of his tender lungs. His melody *blitzkrieged* the music world and the audience sat soaked in transcendental melody, chaste and warm, mind and body tuned to the vibrant but soulful music. Like Veena Balachander, Mali is credited with evolving a style close to vocal rendition that took care of the sahitya and the bhava conveyed therein. Says his renowned disciple and flautist Dr. N. Ramani:

'The secret of his success was his adopting a special technique of cross-fingering of a compound character and his superb command and grip over laya. His music was akin to the royal style, a departure from that of his predecessors...his nimble fingers caressed the curves, flashed out the glories of swara prastara in striking succession. His technique was remarkable resulting in a rich tonal quality.'

Mali's rendition enraptured the audience and he was a legend as a teenager. 'Verily a divine messenger in Carnatic music, he knew its boundless dimensions.'

Son of Ramaswami Ayyar, Mali was born at Tiruvidaimarudur and learnt vocal music from Jalra Gopala Ayyar along with his elder brother Gouthaman. He switched over to flute soon. His ascent to the top centre stage was so quick and dynamic that there was difficulty in finding accompaniment as juniors felt dazed while seniors were ill at ease to be sidemen to a boy! Quite soon, reluctance of seniors gave place to a rush to participate in his concerts! Mali - Palghat Mani were the select top pair like Miller - Lindwall or Prasanna - Chandrasekhar in cricket and S.G. Kittappa and K.B. Sundarambal in drama. There was perfect identity of approach, anticipation and understanding between the two colossuses in presenting, rhythm supported melody, vibrant music each prodding and complementing the other. The identity did not rest with partnership on the concert stage and forming a grand alliance. Both were prodigies; both shot into fame like the Caesar's *veni, vidi, vici*; and both left this planet in the month of May! It is perplexing that unpredictable Mali and stoic Mani could forge an enduring partnership. They were poles apart in personal traits and yet they understood and appreciated the artistic merits of each other well.

Mahalingam left a rich crop of disciples in Dr. N. Ramani, Dr. Prapancham Seetharam, T.S. Sankaran, N. Kesi, Dindigul Natarajan, N.S. Srinivasan, K.S. Narayanan and L. Sundaram.

Mali was a good violinist too and had provided accompaniment to stalwarts and given solos. Veterans had given violin support to him too. It was a challenge to keep time to his devilous play sometimes. It is said that A.T. Kannan committed an error once and Amjad Ali Khan had to request Kishan Maharaj to keep the beats so that Mali could resume the concert. Dwaram Venkataswami Naidu and Papa Venkataramayya, senior violinists were on cordial terms with him.

Mali married Ellen Dryer of USA in 1974 and returned to India last in 1985. The magnificent grandeur and clarity he commanded in music did not find a sympathetic chord in his personal life. His punctuality was notorious. Kavignar Kannadasan, a tamil poet of eminence used to say humourously, '*Emmadamayinum sammadam; aanaal ennudaiya madam taamadam*' (whatever be the religion, it is the same to me; but my religion is lack of punctuality)! Mali was a staunch devotee of the latter half of the dictum. When violin maestro Lalgudi Jayaraman queried, 'You are cancelling engagements so often; if you do not like any, why should you accept the offer at all?', Mali enlightened him saying, 'How can I cancel if I do not accept one?' and laughed away little conscious of the damage to his image. Probably the fact that he was at the peak of glory while still so young had upset the even tenor of his life and injected a massive dose of lack of equilibrium, restlessness or discontent or distrust with himself. When as a boy of ten, he found himself 'blessed with a tone, shaped into musical phrases, risings and fullings by fingers directed by genius already mature', how could he hold on for five long, long decades? He could rarely 'add to, or develop the perfectly presented flute attributes! Mali probably faced the problem of the ... tyranny of tone, a fulfilled unchanging flute language' coming in the way of his musical expression and personal life. A spiritual outlook would have solved it. Probably Mali did not invoke it. (*Vide* Page 309 of *A Garland*.)

One has heard of Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar declining to sing '*Giripai*' stating that it had become the property of Bikshandarkoil Subbarayar and of Harikesanallur Muthiah Bhagavatar withdrawing his recording of '*Evarani*' when he heard S.G. Kittappa's rendition of that song. Mali joined this noble tribe when he asked All India Radio not to broadcast some of his discs on the plea of lack of standards ! A lofty deed in truth.

Disc recordings.

Concert tours :

UK, ITALY, FRANCE, USA.

Titles :

Padma Sri (1965),  
Venugana Alankara,  
Madurakala Praveena.



Indescribable softness and exhilarating melody with crisp adherence to tala and identity with sruti were the hallmark of his flute-play. Probably the world of art lost much by his imponderable life.

\* \* \*

### **TIRUVIDAIMARUDUR MAHALINGAM PILLAI - PERCUSSIONIST:**

**(20th Century)**

Parents : Subramania Pillai & Pattammal

Place of birth : Tiruvidaimarudur

Learnt Taval under Tiruvalaputhur Pasupathiah Pillai and has given accompaniment to several reputed nagaswara vidwans including P.S. Veeruswami Pillai. He was honoured by the Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram.

\* \* \*

### **RAJAH MAHENDRA VARMAN I - MUSICOLOGIST:**

**(590 - 630A.D.)**

Mahendra Varman, the Pallava Ruler of Kanchipuram, figures in the life of Apostle Appar for persecuting him and later finding himself converted to Saivism by the same Appar. He was an expert in tamil music and was responsible for the Kudumiamalai inscriptions in Pudukottai district. The main inscription mentions the tamil *panns* Shadja Gramam, Madya Gramam, Gandaram, Kaisika Madyamam, Panchamam and Sadarikam. Gramam is a group of tunes. Four types of *panns* and the manner of singing them are furnished. Dr. Mu. Arunachalam states that the classification of four types had disappeared long ago, that the notes would seem to be both for singing and playing on the yazh. The inscriptions occupy an area of 13' by 14' arranged in seven sections with sub sections each comprising fifteen sets of four swaras. Full swara notation for many grama forms which were then in currency are given. One cannot but wonder at the vast musical knowledge of the ruler and his great concern to perpetuate the same following the rock edicts of Asoka.

R. Sathyanarayana of Mysore Brothers, in his '*Kudumiamalai Inscriptions on Music*', states that the inscriptions are in pallava grantha script containing all the headings and the colophon in samskrithi with a line in tamil at the end. The term '*Sankirna Jati*' occurring in the inscriptions is stated to be an honorific of the king in recognition of his expertise. 'It contains quadruple groupings of musical notes pertaining to the seven archaic suddha grama ragas... a precious evidence of musical practices in ancient India.' Authorities cited include Bharata, Matanga, Narada and Sarngadeva and contains musical data from puranas. The inscriptions are stated to have given rise to different views and interpretations.

A similar inscription at nearby Thirumayam in Pudukottai district has suffered damage badly.

\* \* \*

### **MANGALAM MUTHUSWAMY : VEENA ARTISTE:**

**(b. March 3, 1937)**

Place of birth	:	Sivaganga (now a district headquarters. Whether Papanasam Sivan's ' <i>Sivaganga Nagaranivasini</i> ' relates to this place is not clear.)
Parentage	:	S.V. Subramanya Ayyar & Lakshmi Bai, a disciple of Pallaswami Raju and daughter of Flautist Kothandarama Ayyar.
Musical training	:	Initially with mother; later under Visalakshi, Rishi Valley School.
Debut	:	At the Shashtiabthapoorti of C. Ramaswami Ayyar.

Mangalam Muthuswami has been giving veena concerts in India and abroad and on the All India Radio, including a series of recitals for the benefit of refugees from Bangladesh. Gives vocal concerts too and her play on veena 'exudes firm grasp, depth and clarity'.

Concert tours	:	Singapore, Australia, Middle East.
Award received	:	Surmani Award of Sursagar Samsad.

#### **Posts held :**

Faculty Member, Baratiya College of Music and Fine Arts, Bombay (1978 - 1986)  
 Faculty Member, Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha (Since 1986)  
 Examiner, Vocal Classical Diploma Course, Bombay University (three years)

\* \* \*

### **KARAIKUDI R. MANI - MRIDANGAM MAESTRO:**

**(b. September 11, 1945)**

Mani was born at Karaikudi, of Ramanatha Ayyar who taught mathematics and vocal music at the High school. It was not a strange combination of subjects for a pedagogue but the traits and attitudes of the father were inherited by Mani, who was subjected to a rigorous programme of multi-pronged training in vocal music for an hour, mridangam for an hour and school lessons for an hour to qualify for his morning cup of coffee from the exacting, knowledgeable parents! As a boy his interest in music was immense and dedicated. He had his training in percussion for varying periods under –

Karaikudi Rangu Iyengar who was running a mridangam school  
at Karaikudi,

T.R. Harihara Sarma, who runs a school at Madras and  
K.M. Vaidyanathan, the ghatam artiste.

Having made his debut at the age of ten, Mani had been providing percussive support at concerts, harikathas and bhajans. He became a devotee of Tanjore Vaidyanatha Ayyar's style and won the President's Gold Medal in the All India Radio Music Competition 1962 and later a Merit Scholarship for advanced training. Karaikudi Mani is now a top artiste providing thrilling percussion to top musicians. Calm, collected, he gives compact, well-planned display of rhythmic excellence, innovative variations and subtlety. He provides constructive support to the principal musician and does not believe in loud displays. He has pleasing play, rich artistry, virtuous styles, clarity and appealing rhythm.

He is the Founder-Director of the 'Sruthilaya' percussion ensemble which seeks to present scholarly, intellectual rhythmic play in traditional styles. The ensemble has toured USSR, France, Italy, Belgium and U.K. Sruthilaya is available only for concerts abroad and for recordings. His organising ability is further reflected in his **Tala Vichitra** ensemble and the founding of 'Sruthilaya Seva Trust'. Training is provided to capable students.

'**Melodyyssey**' of musical orchestration of cultures inaugurated at Madras in December 1991 is another venture of Karaikudi Mani comprising forty artistes of South Indian, North Indian and Western instruments with voices.

The unique character of Mani is his not accepting titles! And he reigns along with other giants of the art showing how such titles have little impact on percussive advents and popularity and the true image of a talented artiste.

Disc recordings :

\* \* \*

**GHATAM MANI AYYAR - PERCUSSIONIST:**

**(b.June 21,1895)**

Parents	:	Sankaranarayana Ayyar alias Sri Sangappa Swamigal and Lakshmi Ammal.
Percussion training under	:	Mamundia Pillai, a percussion maestro and Palani Muthiah Pillai.

Mani Ayyar made his debut in 1920 and had accompanied prominent artistes on ghatam. The Music Academy, Madras honoured him with a Certificate of Merit in 1962.

\* \* \*

**S.S. MANI BHAGAVATAR - VOCALIST:**

**(died 1987)**

Panangudi Mani Bhagavatar underwent *bona fide* gurukulavasa under Papanasam Sivan during the thirties and inherited the rich legacy of the

illustrious composer. (The author had the good fortune of sitting at the feet of Sivan when Mani was a very senior disciple of his.) Mani later served as Lecturer in the Kalakshetra, Madras but died prematurely. Unfortunately details are wanting in respect of his life.

\* \* \*

**K.S. MANJUNATHAN - GHATAM ARTISTE : (Decr. 27 1921 – April 23, 1989)**

Manjunathan of Bangalore was a prominent ghatam vidwan who had been giving able and distinguished support at concerts. He had training with Srinivasa Ayyar and L.S. Seshagiri Rao. He had been the recipient of honours including the Rajyotsava Award and the title of 'Karnataka Kala Thilakam' from the Karnataka State Nritya Academy. His ghatam accompaniment finds a record in disc recordings also.

An All India Radio Artiste, Manjunatha was a renowned and popular artiste.

\* \* \*

**MARIAPPASWAMI - COMPOSER-MUSICIAN: (1903-)**

Mariappaswami was giving concerts from his twentieth year and was a popular figure. He had composed three hundred songs on religious and philosophical themes. Has written songs for films also.

Concert tours: Sri Lanka & Malaysia.

\* \* \*

**MATANGA MUNI - MUSICOLOGIST: (7-8th century)**

The period to which Matanga belongs is not clear. The name finds mention in the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Matanga Lila and Raghuvamsa. Whether the musicologist of great merit and reputation is one of these puranic celebrities or different is not known. 'Brhaddesi' is the work of Matanga. Sambasiva Sastri who had edited the book for the Trivandrum Sanskrit Series says that nothing is known of the date of the work or its author. As the work refers to Bharata, Kohala, Dattila, etc., it should relate to a later period than they. Nanyadeva (1097- 1133), in his 'Saraswati Hridayalankara', written as a commentary on *Natya Sastra*, pays obeisance to Matanga thus:

' How could people of lesser intelligence succeed in swimming across the Ocean of Melodies when such exponents of music like Matanga had failed to cross. '

Matanga views that no classical melody can be composed of four notes or less. He is reputed to have been an expert in musical instruments. Gowri Kuppaswamy - M. Hariharan mention that Matanga would seem to have graced the Court of Harsha (607-647 A.D). Matanga is the first musicologist to use the

word raga in ragakadambaka, ragatalamalika or ragamalika ( navaratnamalika or nakshatramalika, pakshamalika or chaturdasamalika ). 'If Matanga is the father of *desi* prabandhas the prabandhas were the forerunners of all later musical compositions.' (Dr. S. Seetha)

'Matanga undoubtedly excels all others in lucidity, erudition and details.'

\* \* \*

**KIVALUR MEENAKSHISUNDARAM PILLAI - MUSICIAN: (died 1971)**

A musician of amiable manners, Meenakshisundaram Pillai brought out the book '*Tyagaraja Kirthanai Porul Vilakkam*' to explain the content and significance of the songs of the Bard of Tiruvaiyaru.

\* \* \*

**NEEDAMANGALAM MEENAKSHISUNDARAM PILLAI -  
PERCUSSION WIZARD: (1894 - February 11, 1949)**

Meenakshisundaram Pillai was a legend in the field of percussion. He was widely known and much respected. A genius, his fingers did magical feats, and the tavil he handled revealed exhilarative potential in rhythm and his art bordered on riotous devilry. He was able to bring out stunning and surprising subtleties in laya. His sensitivity to Art extended to his personal belongings like polishing off his betel box almost every minute and provide an attractive cloth cover even to his (betel) nut-cutter! The genius was a diabetic and while asleep dissolved himself with eternity keeping up his rhythm with nature. He was good at playing kanjira. Had great (mutual) respect for Pudukottai Dakshinamoorti Pillai. At a concert, Dakshinamoorti Pillai playing mridangam forced him to sit on level with him. Meenakshisundaram felt that it was an insult to the dignity of the Pudukkottai maestro to sit so and stopped playing on kanjira itself! The tone of his play was strong and impeccable and his solos permutational and captivating.

What was his public image? Here are two old incidents given long ago by S.R. Kuppuswami, Editor, *Carnata Sangeetham* :

"Needamangalam was playing wonderfully but his figure was not visible to those standing beyond the close ring. One resikha in the surging crowd was anxious to know who it was, captivated by the play, and enquired. Casually I said that 'it was some new hand'. The rasikha observed:

'Whatever it be, it cannot be like Meenakshisundaram ! This player has to toil hard much more and his hands should speak the language much more (to bring out the fire of Pillai's play)!'

Another time. At Tiruvaiyaru, a local tavil artiste was playing. Someone enquired and I replied just for fun 'Meenakshisundaram'. Prompt was the

reaction.

'Aha. What a grand play ? What a fingering ?  
A lion is always a Lion!'

Meenakshisundaram was the word for dynamic excellence. He drew crowds wherever he went. A grandmaster in percussion, he was affable and genial and he played with ease but with inexhaustive energy. A creative artiste, few could match his innovative artifices and combinations, sound permutations and laya intricacies. N.R. Bhuvarahan says:

'The syllables that now murmured and now rumbled and thundered from his tavil were thrilling with sweetness and strength, melody and rhythm.'

Wizard Panchami, who died young as genius perhaps has to, once told Pillai, 'I cannot produce your rhythm and melody.' A rare tribute by another titan.

Pillai's disciples included -

N.T.M. Shanmugha Vadivel, son, Nachiarkoil Raghava Pillai, son-in-law,  
Mayavaram Govindaraja Pillai and Pandanallur Ratnam Pillai.

Disc recordings : He had accompanied Sembanarkoil Ramaswami Pillai.  
Title : 'Abhinava Nandiswarar'

Kanchipuram Naina Pillai told Dakshinamurti Pillai that 'mere professionalism is not a guarantee of intelligent listening' and picked out one from the crowd at Sri Kapaliswarar temple who kept the beat with precision and perfection even during the three-speed tempo pallavi. When he made a request for the 'perfect' listener to come, he found to his surprise that it was Meenakshisundaram Pillai and in choking voice declared:

'How lucky I am. Today I have been greatly honoured. Here is an insurmountable performer who is equally a true listener.'

— (B.M. Sundaram)

Meenakshisundaram Pillai had his gurukulavasa with Needamangalam Govinda Tavilkarar and Nagapattinam Venugopala Pillai. Made his debut as second to Mannargudi Narayanaswami Nagaswarakarar in his twelfth year. Quite strangely, he died in the midst of a huge gathering of well-wishers, relatives and admirers who had gathered for the marriage of his son. A good singer, he kept a very accurate diary and used only pure khadi.

\* \* \*

### BAN THE FLUTE ?

Yes. The prayer is made by the love-lorn lady to Senni Ilavalavan, the Chola ruler 'with the flower garland on'. Why? The melody that spreads from the flute of the cowherd irritates and embitters her in her soliloquy ! 'He may be a good ruler. What if ? He is not silencing the flute', she laments !

— '*Muttollayiram*' - Cited by Mee.Pa. Somu in *Kalki D.M.* 1986.

\* \* \*

**IEERA NARAYANAN - VIOLINIST/VOCALIST: (b.October 30,1965)**

Daughter and disciple of Radha Narayanan, Meera Narayanan had further training under Prof. T.N. Krishnan with a Government of India scholarship. She has been giving violin accompaniment from the age of nine and gives solo concerts also. She is a vocalist having undergone training under M.K. Jayaraman. A graduate, she has received awards from institutions and honours.

She made a unique marathon violin recital for 26 hours non-stop at Sri Ratnagiriswaraswami temple, Besant Nagar, Madras in October 1986 setting a record then. Of course, this has since been surpassed by Violinist K. Kanyakumari in 1988 with a record performance of 29 hours.

Title: *Naanisai* Vallabhi from Baktha Mandali, Ratnagiriswaraswami temple on September 4, 1982.

\* \* \*

**MEERA SESHADRI - VOCALIST: (b.Sept.14, 1938)**

Parents : V.R. Viramani & Revathi Viramani

A graduate in music of Madras University, Meera Seshadri learnt music and dancing from her mother, a good singer and dancer. She had her training in Carnatic Classical music under the musical twins, B.V. Raman and S.V. Lakshmanan and in Hindustani Classical music under L.R. Kelkar, a disciple of Vinayak Rao Patwardhan. She learnt padams and javalis from T. Jayammal.

Meera Seshadri had been performing for over twenty-five years on the All India Radio and elsewhere. Has been giving vocal support to Bharatanatyam, kuchipudi and Odissi dancers. She taught Carnatic vocal at Triveni Kala Sangham to many including foreign students.

Concert tours: U.K. and African countries.

\* \* \*

**T. MUKTHA - VOCALIST : (b.1914)**

Muktha hails from a musical family of stalwarts with Veena Dhanammal at its head. Daughter of Kamakshi, the last of the four daughters of that renowned Vainika, Muktha had her preliminary lessons from her mother and then accompanied her elder sister T. Brinda for training under the celebrated Naina Pillai of Kanchipuram when they were seven and nine years old respectively. While Brinda had her tuitions directly under the maestro, Muktha had the

benefit of listening to his lessons and concerts. The training lasted for six years. The sisters had started giving concerts even while undergoing training. For nearly six decades they had given concerts together - an impressive record. The long partnership came to an end only a decade back when Vegavauhini, named after the janya raga of *Chakravakam*, started accompanying her mother, Brinda as voice support.

Disciples	:	R. Vedavalli, Nirmala Sundararajan and Nirmala Parthasarathi (veena).
Honours	:	Sangita Nataka Akademy Award 1972. Certificate of Merit from Music Academy, Madras 1984. Kanchi Kamakoti Peetha Sangeeta Seva Trust honours 1991.

Semmangudi Dr. Srinivasa Ayyar Trust and Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar Trust have also honoured her.

Concert tour	:	USA 1990.
		* * *

### **MUMMADI CHIKKA BHUPALA - MUSICOLOGIST: (c. 1600 / 1760)**

A ruler hailing from Bijjavara - Madhugiri in Tumkur district and a feudatory of Vijayanagar Kings, Mummadi Chikka Bhupala is stated to be a contemporary of Venkatamakhin, author of *Chaturdandi Prakasika*. He has authored the work *Abhinava Bharatasara Sangraha*, a treatise on musical theory. 'A merited compilation, it gives a systematic synthesis of the cultural history of South India in general terms and the musical history in particular. Has drawn inspiration from *Sangita Ratnakara* and other authorities like Dattila, Kohala, Matanga, Rama Matya, *Sangita Sara* and *Sakala Maha Sangraha*. The work has been republished by Sri Varalakshmi Academies of Fine Arts, Mysore with Prof. R. Sathyanarayana as Editor.

\* \* \*

### **DENKANIKOTTAI R. MUNIRATNAM - PERCUSSIONIST: (b. March 2, 1940)**

Born of	Ramiah and Seethamma,
at	Denkanikotta, Dharmapuri district.

Learnt tavil under his distinguished maternal uncle, Venkataramanappa and has been a distinguished tavil artiste who had accompanied not only nagaswaram vidwans like Karukurichi Arunachalam and Namagiripettai Krishnan but also Flautist T.R. Mahalingam, Sitar maestro Pandit Ravishanker and the Shenai maestro Bismillah Khan. It is an unique record and achievement indeed and speaks volumes about the wide spectrum of variations, percussive tonal adjustments and styles he is able to develop. Had won the acclaim of



artistes and music-lovers. Has been a member of the Karnataka State Sangita Nataka Academy and has won many honours including 'Kalaimamani' from the Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram in 1979.

Concert tours : U.K., France, Germany, Singapore, Malaysia and Sri Lanka.

\* \* \*

### **C.S. MURUGABHUPATHY - MRIDANGAM ARTISTE: (b. February 16,1914)**

Father and guru : Chitsabhai Servai of Ramanathapuram

Brother and guru : Sankara Sivam of Ramanathapuram

Murugabhupathy had training under his grandfather too. The first important concert for him (almost debut) was at Tiruchendur when he played for Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavata as the nominated percussionist failed to turn up. The maestro had to take the young boy but as usual with him brought out of him the best play to the satisfaction of all. Murugabhupathy is ever grateful to him. He has been providing accompaniment to top musicians and was a favourite of flautist T.R. Mahalingam. Rich with age, he is in good style still. At the concert at Shanmukhananda Sabha, Bombay, as the drone was not sruti-aligned, Madurai Mani Ayyar relied on the sruti of his mridangam, states Murugabhupathy with pride.

#### **Posts held:**

Visiting Principal, Tamil Isai Sangham Music School, Madurai  
Member, Advisory Committee, Government Music College, Madras.  
Member, Fine Arts Faculty, Annamalai University, Chidambaram.  
Member, Experts Committee, Music Academy, Madras.  
Member, All India Radio Panel for Music.

#### **Titles & Honours :**

Sivaganga Palace Asthana Vidwan	1949
Kalaimamani by Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram	1969
Merit Certificate from the Music Academy, Madras	1973
Padma Sri from President of India	1973
Madhura Kala Praveena by Sadguru Sangita Samajam, Madurai	1974
Sangit Natak Akademy Award	1975
Sur Sagar Award - Bombay	1976
State Artiste, Tamil Nadu Government	1979
Isai Perarignar by Tamil Isai Sangham, Madras	1979
Palghat Mani Ayyar Award	1985
Sangita Kala Nipuna by Fine Arts Club, Madras	1991

Concert tours: Sri Lanka 1948 and 1951

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**PITHUKULI MURUGADAS - BHAGAVATA:****(b. 1918)**

Place of birth	:	Coimbatore
Parents	:	C.G. Sundaram Ayyar & Alamelu Ammal
Musical background	:	Grandfather Ariyur Gopalakrishna Bhagavatar was a bhajan specialist. Uncle Radhakrishna Bhagavatar was a musical discouser.

Balasubramaniam, now known as Pithukuli Murugadas, had studied upto the eighth standard. Murugadas is the name assumed by him and Pithukuli, meaning a madcap, was an acquisition subsequent to an unintended episode with a sanyasi, who called him 'Pithukuli'. Murugadas left his parental house on a pilgrimage with nothing but his ardent desire for spiritual pursuits. In 1938 he joined the Anandashramam at Tanjankadu near Mangalore. His subsequent peregrinations in his familiar dress comprising a four-cubit dhoti, jibba and a cloth-cover on his head, all in khadi, took him to different places. He had undergone imprisonment for participating in a struggle for a public cause in Mysore.

Murugadas has an appealing voice and mode of rendition. His inseparable harmonium serves him well and with a tinge of the bhajan styles of Maharashtra and other places, his music has a strong mass base. With his knowledge of different languages, he is able to bring out the bhava-rasa of the different compositions. He has given thousands of bhajan concerts at most of the places of India, All India Radio and television. He plays on harmonium while singing. He is one of the few bhajan artistes out of a large tribe who continue devotional work.

Concert Tours:	South Africa, Sri Lanka, Europe, UK, Singapore, Mauritius.
Disc Recordings:	
Publications:	Devi pugazh & Guhanjali containing his own compositions.
Honours & Titles:	Sangita Samrat by Sri Sivananda Saraswati of Rishikesh Kalaimamani by the Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram.

Devi Saroja, his wife and her sisters are disciples of his.

\* \* \*

**VARAHUR MUTHUSWAMI AYYAR - VIOLINIST:****(b. Sept. 1902)**

Place of birth	:	Kandamangalam, Tanjore district.
Parents	:	Sami Bhagavatar & Janaki Ammal
Musical training under	:	His father and under Sangita Kalandhi Chinnaswamy Ayyar.

Post held	:	Assistant Professor, Central College of Carnatic Music, Madras.
Honours	:	Certificate of Merit from the Music Academy, Madras in 1962

Muthuswamy Ayyar was giving violin accompaniment at concerts.

\* \* \* \* \*

### "CHATURDANDI PRAKASIKA" 'Speaks'

'The Dikshitar family adhered to the sampradaya of Venkatamakhin. The success was only partial. Present day musicians praise the system but few persons would have glanced inside the book... If the *Chaturdandi Prakasika* had been published a century earlier, the course of the present music would have been entirely different'

— Dr. T.S. Ramakrishnan.

"Venkatamakhin (c. 1635/1660), second son of Govinda Dikshitar of Tanjore authored me. Description of seventy-two scales, their corresponding raganga ragas and upaganga and bhashanga janya ragas are given. Lakshana and lakshya gitas, tanas and prabhandas are provided to illustrate the karta ragas.

In 1646, the Nawab of Golkonda invaded and the Nayak ruler of Tanjore had to flee. In 1673, he was killed in a battle and there was consequent political anarchy in the Tanjore area. To ensure my safety, like Panna Dai, the loyal nurse secreting Uday Singh, the infant son of Rana Sangha of Chitor in Rajasthan, I was taken into secret custody by —

Venkata Vaidyanatha Dikshitar of Tiruvidadimarudur and Govinda Dikshita, both descendants of Venkatamakhin and the Sankaracharya of the Kanchi Komakoti Peetam at Kumbakonam.

When I was under such anonymity, there was a development which affected much my future though not my life which was safe inside an incubator! Govindacharya of Kakavattaram brought out his '*Sangita Sastra Samkshepa*' or '*Sangita Chudamani*' inspired by Akhalanka and published it with the help of the Tanjore Palace. Seventy-two melakarta ragas were named in accordance with the '*Kangipriya*' nomenclature. Raganga ragas of Venkatamakhin and their janyas came to be treated janyas of the melakarta ragas. This received wide currency in the Tanjore belt and Tyagaraja is stated to have had a copy of it and used it in his compositions. Lavani Venkata Rao composed the '*Bahattara Melakarta Malika*' in accordance with it and published it. Chandragiri Rangacharlu composed three hundred lakshana gitas - one for each of the ragas enumerated by Govindacharya. Tachur Singaracharyulu Brothers fully publicised the Akalanka tradition without acknowledgement towards the close of the last century or the beginning of the present.

I would have remained still-born or left in the forgotten incubator but for Ramaswami Dikshitar (1735-1817) receiving me from Muddu Venkata Vaidyanath Dikshitar during the chance meeting at Manali. Muthuswami Dikshitar (1776-1835) and later Subbarama Dikshitar (1839-1906) tried their best to repair the wrong features that had crept into the system during my 'affectionate incarceration'.

The Akhalanka - Govindacharya system known as the *Kanakangi-Ratnangi* System had taken roots and is predominantly in use now.

\* \* \* \* \*

### THE ODYSSEIAN

'Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar represented the Odysseian type devoting greater time to raga elaboration. He used to venture boldly in the realm of fancy in developing a raga revealing fresh vistas of beauty to the delight of all and give new dimensions.'

\* \* \*

### MUSICAL BIG-BEN

#### Vainika's Merit

'Invariably a soloist, Dhanammal plays and sings all alone with not even a mridangam for accompaniment. Only a sort of drone is kept on by the marvellous dexterity of her frail little finger that rubs the Pakkasaranis, a feature that stands in marked contrast to the loud, regular, intruding ding-dong of all other vainikas that resembles the chiming of Big-Ben in London.'

— R. Rangaramanuja Ayyangar.

\* \* \*

### DONKEY GAME !

Bidaram Krishnappa, Actor Lakshmiapati Sastri, Kundoor Srikantiah, Tabla Surpandit and Mysore Vasudevacharya used to play a game of cards called *Katthe Ata* (Donkey game). Fortunately the loser need not ride a donkey in the streets but should put on a uniform, hold up a rifle and give a military salute to the winner. Krishnappa lost the game and was about to take on the costume when a real sepoy entered and said that the Maharajah called him. Helplessly, the vocalist put on the uniform and holding a rifle gave the salute - all the time looking at the sepoy with a sense of embarrassment and shame. The sepoy enjoyed the maestro saluting him! A strange play.

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# N

## **MYSORE M. NAGARAJ - VIOLINIST:**

**(b.1930)**

Eldest son of S. Mahadevappa, a violinist, Nagaraj was musically talented even as a boy and made his appearance on the stage at the age of eleven. Since then his rise to artistic heights has been phenomenal. Has a charming style and is giving accompaniment to prominent artistes and giving solo concerts also. A popular violinist, he is Staff Artiste of the All India Radio, Mysore.

Concert Tours:

U.S.A., Canada.

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## **NAGARAJA BHAGAVATAR - MUSICAL DISCOURSER:**

**(20th Century)**

Disciple of Govindaraja Bhagavatar, Nagaraja Bhagavatar was noted for sruti suddham, lively exposition and polished handling of themes for harikathas. He followed the style of Tanjore Krishna Bhagavatar. He was popular in Tanjore district.

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## **V. NAGARAJAN - KANJIRA ARTISTE:**

**(b. July 30, 1930)**

Son of the famous violin vidwan of yester decades Sangeetha Kalanidhi Papa K.S. Venkataramiah, V. Nagarajan had his training under two celebrated percussionists, viz., Tanjore Vaidyanatha Ayyar and Palghat Mani Ayyar, the later being the first percussioninst to be honoured with the title of Sangita Kalanidhi. Nagarajan made his debut in 1950 at Tiruchirappalli accompanying Alathur Brothers. Since then he has given percussive support to all artistes of repute. Kanjira was prominent a decade or two back. Now ghatam has usurped its place since the number of ghatam artistes is on the arohana and kanjira artistes are on avarohana.

He joined the Faculty of the Wesleyan University as a Visiting Professor in 1967 and taught at Berkely, California in 1974. He has trained a number of American Fulbright scholars.

Honour	:	Asthana Vidwan, Sri Sankaracharya Mutt, Kanchipuram
Disc recordings	:	
Concert tours	:	Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Singapore, USA, UK, USSR, Canada, etc.

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**PALLADAM K. NAGARAJA RAO - FLAUTIST:****(b.190**

A nephew and disciple of the celebrated flautist Palladam Sanjeeva Rao, Nagaraja Rao was a popular flautist. His rendition was sweet, melodious and traditional. He stayed at Mysore. He had invitations from abroad but did not choose to go.

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**R. NAGARAJA RAO - FLAUTIST:****(July 1883 -**

Born	:	at Nachiarkoil near Kumbakonam, of Ramanatha Rao, landlord and violinist.
General education	:	Matriculation at Pudukottai.
Training in music	:	Preliminary lessons in flute from Kannuswami Rao, brother of Swaragat Chittuswami Rao.

Nagaraja Rao did not take to his scholastic studies kindly and came up for admonition from his uncle and guardian, R. Ramachandra Rao. Was faced with the dilemma of abandoning music or deserting his uncle. Owing to his stubborn leanings to music, he left his uncle and took up tuitions to maintain himself. Later became the village munsif of Nachiarkoil noted for its brassware, temple art and cultural background. In 1902, the flute maestro Sarabha Sastri tested him and found him well advanced in his art. However, Nagaraja Rao was not destined to have training under him as Sarabha soon lost health and later died in 1903. This led Nagaraja Rao to the eminent vocalist, Umayalpuram Swaminatha Ayyar and he had training under him for two years.

Rao was noted for his raga alapanas, fast rendition and modulated tonal felicity. A kindly, soft artiste, he had helped many young artistes to come up.

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**NAGASWAMI BHAGAVATAR - VOCALIST:****(1894 - 1952)**

A Well known vocalist. A sourashtra, he was based in Madurai. He specialised in the songs of Tyagarajah and Wallajahpet Venkataramar Bhagavatar. Nagaswami Bhagavatar founded Sri Sadguru Sangita Samajam Madurai in 1911, which is a flourishing premier institution.

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**BANGALORE NAGARATHINAMMAL - THYAGA SEVA SAKTHA:****(Novr. 3, 1878 - May 19, 1952)**

The great lady of Bangalore belonged to the fragrant period which saw a galaxy of illustrious women musicians like Veena Dhanammal, Saleema Meenakshi, Enadhi Lakshmi Narayani Sisters, Coimbatore Thayee, Bangalore

Thayee, Tiruvarur Rajayee and Kolar Nagarathinam. The trio MSS, DKP, MLV joined them later. But Bangalore Nagarathinammal was altogether of a different type in that she was able to look beyond herself and music rendition and focus her attention on the source of such resplendent music. Her sublimated soul envisioned the Cauvery and its music - soaked cultured waters not only at Tiruvaiyaru but at the distant Mercara where lies its source. Others came, sang and left. But her genius perceived something greater, enduring and substantial. She enjoys the unique distinction of having surrendered her all to the service of the Great Bard of Tiruvaiyaru, Tyagarajah. With single-minded devotion and dedication, she sold her properties, pooled her income and enlisted the support of all to commence the construction of the Samadhi of Tyagarajah on the bank of the Cauvery on October 27, 1921 and perform the *Kumbhabhishekam* on January 7, 1925. She started the annual celebrations (*aradhana*) on a firm and grand scale. The samadhi lands were donated by Sri Mannapa Saheb and Sri Rajaram Mannaji Surve. And she spent her last years there giving lessons on Tyagarajah songs at the 'Tyaga Brahma Nilayam', a dedicated construction work in which the eminent cine actor, Chittoor V. Nagayya played the principal role. Quite fittingly, her samadhi is located near the samadhi of the Bard. Another wish fulfilled.

Nagarathinammal was an amalgam of sterling character, obsessive and noble dedication to good causes held dear to her heart and of dharmic conduct which combined in itself the essence of the Ramayana service - oriented characters Sabhari, Lakshmana, Vibhishana and Hanuman and the achievements on a mini scale of a Rajaraja Chola. Devoted to her gurus, she performed guru poojahs annually and also Hanumat Jayanti. She was chosen specifically to sing a sanskrit invocation at the All India Sanatana Dharma Conference in 1929. She gave a large number of concerts and the bulk of the proceeds went for the construction of the Tyagarajah Samadhi and the Mysore Choultry at Tiruvaiyaru for the benefit of Kannadigas.

Born at Mysore, of Vakil Subba Rao and Puttulakshmi, she learnt sanskrit and music under Giripatta Thimmayyah and violin from her uncle Venkitasami Appa of Bangalore. Had further training in violin under Munuswamy Appa, a disciple of Wallajahpet Krishnaswami Bhagavatar. Her desire for knowledge was so intense that she learnt bharatanatyam under Bangalore Kittanna and abhinaya from Madras Tiruvenkatachariar. Her over-all vidwat was polished off by Bidaram Krishnappa. Puttulakshmi was discarded first by Subba Rao and later by Thimmayyah also. But she bore her travails and tribulations and brought up her daughter with an iron will. There is some resemblance in the teen-age sufferings of Nagarathinammal and K.B. Sundarambal but in the ultimate analysis, the former is supreme in enduring attainments. While Sundarambal hoarded material wealth, Nagarathinammal too did hoard but in the more enduring spiritual sphere. With multi-sided accomplishments, Nagarathinam made her debut significantly at Veena Seshanna's house in her

fifteenth year. Palaces and institutions availed of her immense training and talents both in India and in Sri Lanka. It is said that she gave 1235 engagements between 1905 and 1934, which is equivalent to ten times that now.

She enjoyed a '*gambhira*' voice. Her infatuation with the songs and life of Tyagarajah was so intense and sublime that she executed a will on January 1949 setting apart her assets to construct the Samadhi and to run a gurukula Tiruvaiyaru to propagate the Bard's songs. There was Yaga, Yoga, Thyaga and Bhoga with *nadopasana* in her life of suffering and achievement.

Her only daughter died. Her attempt to adopt a girl failed. Her suffering while young and these failures tended only to harden her admiration for Tyagarajah, the Prince of Renunciation, and her resolve to accomplish all that he achieved while others had ignored.

Her intense love of his songs was matched only by her passion for Devaranamas and to demonstrate that Purandara songs could also be sung likewise in such an elaborate and scholarly manner, she got up a concert at Bidaram Krishnappa at Madras to be covered only by Devaranamas. Mysore Vasudevacharya says, 'Ragalapana, Swarakalpana, neraval, everything was there as in a traditional concert. The audience felt delighted. They realised for the first time that the Kannadigas also have their own individualistic heritage.'

On her music, Vasudevacharya says:

'Her style of singing was religiously classical. She had accurate layagnana. Her voice combined the melodic sweetness of a female voice with the dignity of a male voice. she had a sound knowledge of bharatanatya, her singing had an emotional appeal. *Yadukulakambhoji* was her favourite. She was never afraid of any challenge from any musician.'

She rarely handled the kritis of Dikshitar as she felt that she would not be able to do justice to them because of her inadequate knowledge of sanskrit. Tyagarajah and Purandara had won her heart so fully that it had no space for others !

Here is an assessment of her personality and life by Vasudevacharya:

'A queen among dancers and singers, she was an apostle of modesty. In the pride of the Kannada Land, she was a selfless soul and had the boon of beauty, learning and wealth in equal proportions...her respectful demeanour in the presence of senior vidwans attracted me. She stood as though content to offer worship, never even looked up...spoke little...a divine charm harked back to her beauty'.

## **Publications:**

Her publications include:



*Madhyapanam* in telugu,  
*Sri Tyagaraja Ashtothra Namavali* in sanskrit and  
*Panchee Karana Bowdheeka* in tamil.

Jagarathinammal reprinted the telugu classic '*Radhika Swayamvaram*' of Muddu Palani, a courtesan of the 18th century. Police seized all the copies aking objection to its high eroticism. Only in 1947 the ban was lifted. There was a fresh edition in 1952.

### **Titles and Honours:**

- i.. March 6, 1949 - Tyaga Seva Saktha by President of India.
- ii. Vidya Sundari by Puranam Suryanarayana Thirthar
- iii. 1932 -Gana Kala Visaradha by Kaviraja Krishnamurti Sastri.

Nagarathinammal needs no better honour than the appreciation and gratitude of the thousands who gather annually at Tiruvaiyaru for the Aradhana. ' Earn, Conserve, Distribute', this is my life-mission, declared the Founder of the Annamalai University. The application of the principle to the life of Nagarathinammal reveals that she belongs to the galaxy of eminent women of India. Literally she got dissolved in every respect in *nadopasana* !

Once, a marriage in a Komutti Chettiar's house was on when the bride's ninety-five year old grandmother was in a critical condition. Nagarathinammal giving the concert for the marriage took up towards the end the sloka:-

*'Prana Prayana Samaye' ( The time of soul's journey.)*

The song and the sentiment coincided with the real life-event on the occasion! (T. Sankaran)

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**KOLAR NAGARATNAMMA - VOCALIST:**

**(20th Century)**

In yester decades, women's contribution to and role in concert music were limited. Of the few who were prominent, Kolar Nagaratnamma was one. Her mother Nanjundasani was a dancer and her brother Puttuswamiayya was a violinist. While her name is mentioned prominently, details are not known.

\* \* \*

**DOLAK NANNU MIYA - PERCUSSIONIST:**

**(19th Century - II Half)**

He was a muslim artiste from Pudukottai famed for his thrilling play on the percussive instrument dolak rarely used at concerts. It is a tribute to his astounding expressive play that he had accompanied such stalwarts as Patnam Subramania Ayyar. Soolamangalam Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar pays tributes to

his innovative exposition and single-minded efforts to make every concert a success irrespective of the grade of the principal artiste. He used a jingle in his right finger to present exhilarating tinkling sounds. His percussive presentation was of such excellence that even Tanjore Narayanaswami Appa felt envious of his '*parens*' (a method of play). Vaidyanatha Bhagavata says that the embellishment '*deka*' started with him, that he was a terror to other percussionists and that even Gandharvas would be enchanted by his eclecticism. Chote Miya gave him company as vocalist when he was not accompanying celebrities. *Vide* chapter on 'Contests and Challenges' in Part I too for Nannu's adventures.

\* \* \*

### **NARADA - MUSICOLOGIST:**

(1st Century A.D.)

The work '*Naradiyasiksha*' "has found a permanent place in the history of musicology. It deals with swara and chanda of vedic mantras in 230 slokas narrating both the vedic and the *laukika* swaras and gives a comprehensive view of ancient Hindu music." Narada refers to the importance of swaras, the seven swaras, three gramas, twenty-one murcchanas and forty-nine tanas constituting the swara mandal. He cites Tumburu, Vasishtha and Biswavasas as authorities. Both vocal and instrumental music are mentioned. Definitions are given. Swami Prajnananda mentions that microtones were perfected by Narada and he has called '*diptha*, *ayata*, *karuna*, *mridhu* and *madhya*' as '*shruthis*'.

A number of treatises are ascribed to Narada. There have been a number of Naradas like Narada of the ninth century who authored *Makaranda* meaning musical pollens, in which forty-two ragas are mentioned. For the first time, the terms Purusha - Stri ragas are cited.

These Naradas are different from the puranic musical sage and trouble-shooter (*vide* page XLIX of *A Garland*).

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### **M.A. NARASIMHACHAR - THE COMPLETE MUSICIAN:**

(b. August 12, 1919)

'M.A.N. represents the Karnatak tradition in its purest form and is a veritable respositor of classical tradition. Affable, soft-spoken, he is ready with answers to all problems and is an authority.' — (E.R.Sethuram).

Place of birth	:	Mysore
Parents	:	M.A. Krishnaswamy Iyengar & Rajamma.

Initiated in music by his mother, Narasimhachar joined the then prestigious Music College of the Annamalai University, studied under the stalwarts Tiger Varadachariar, Ponniah Pillai, a descendant of the Tanjore Quartette family,

Sathur Krishna Ayyangar and T.K. Rangachariar and got the 'Sangeetha Bhushana' title in 1940, being the first Mysorean to get it. He learnt veena from K.S. Narayanaswamy; and obtained a student certificate from the Trinity College of Music, London in Western music too in 1939. He is blessed with a very good voice.

Started 'Ganakala Mandira' in 1942 at Mysore later shifted to Bangalore in 1972. Simultaneously Narasimhachar started his performing career in 1942 and made his entry into the musical circles at Madras in 1945 at the elitist Jagannatha Bhakta Sabha, Madras. Ever since he had given innumerable concerts at sabhas, for Doordarshan and on the All India Radio, Jammu and Kashmir in the north to Trivandrum in the south. He popularised the rare compositions of Veena Kuppiah, Wallajahpet Venkataramana Bhagavata and Anaiyya besides many musical operas. He has chaired many conferences and seminars. The senior musician has enjoyed a very good concert demand. His knowledge of many languages and the science and art of music enables a versatility rarely enjoyed by many artistes. His vast repertoire provides scope for presentation of papers on varied technical issues and aspects of great value to the music world.

Publications	:	Veena Seshanna Tirukkodikaval Krishna Ayyar Tiger Varadachariar Theory of Music	→	all in Kannada.
Posts held	:	Lecturer, Maharani's College, Mysore Lecturer, College of Dance, Drama, Music and Fine Arts, Manasa Gangotri, Mysore. Head of the Department of Music, Acharya Parasala College, Bangalore. Examiner in Music & Musicology, Kalakshetra and Universities. Special Lecturer to Post-graduate students at the Bangalore University. Guru for the third batch of students 1988-89 in gurukula teaching for the South Zone Cultural Centre, Tanjore.		
Honours	:	Sangeetha Jyoti by Swami Shivananda of Rishikesh Ganakala Bhushana by Karnataka Ganakala Parishat, Bangalore in 1987. Honour by Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar Trust in 1990.		
Concert tour	:	Sri Lanka.		

Among his disciples, Lakshmi and Saraswati, his sisters and M.A. Meera and M.A. Mythili, his daughters give concerts.

**V.V. NARASIMHACHAR - MUSICOLOGIST:****( b. June 8, 1898)**

Narasimhachar had his musical training under D. Subramanya Garu, a disciple of Tachur Singaracharyulu. He had made a detailed study of sanskrit works on music. Was connected with the Madras Music Academy since its inception and had contributed much to the high-level deliberations of the Experts Committee of the Academy. He organised the Saraswati Gana Sabha, Kakinada and published a book on 22 srutis, talas, pallavi and biographies. He brought out the telugu version of *Divya Prabhandam* and the book 'Evolution of Carnatic Music'.

He was honoured by the Telugu Basha Samiti and by the Music Academy, Madras with a Certificate of Merit in 1973.

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**N. NARASIMHAN - VOCALIST & CHITRA VEENA PLAYER:****(b. July 15, 1943)**

Son of the legendary gottuvadyam maestro K.S. Narayana Iyengar and Jayalakshmi, Narasimhan is a vocalist and chitra veena artiste presently working in the Vadya Vrinda ensemble of the All India Radio, Madras. Narasimhan is a silent professional, unostentatious but a devoted artiste who delights in preparing, moulding child prodigies, his son Ravi Kiran being the earliest in 1969. (*Vide* his biography elsewhere in this book.) Sashikiran, Kiranavali and Sudarshan (Ganesh) are among his special products.

Central Sangeet Natak Academy awarded Senior Fellowship to him in 1970.

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**M. NARAYANASWAMI AYYAR - MRIDANGIST:****(b. Sept. 30, 1919)**

Place of birth	: Kumbakonam
Parentage	: Muthuswami Ayyar (Mridangist) & Seethalakshmi Ammal

Father was a disciple of the renowned Azhaganambi Pillai and Flute maestro Sarabha Sastri was his sister's husband. The musical background enabled young Narayanaswami to aspire for a place in the field of music and his father chose percussion as his field of specialisation because of his own expertise in it. Narayanaswami had his training in mridangam successively with his father, Umayalpuram Kothandarama Ayyar. Azhaganambi Pillai, Rangu Ayyangar and Rangaswami Ayyangar. The varied training under celebrated percussionists equipped him with deep insight into the finer nuances of percussion. In 1936 he made his debut at Kumbakonam with Veppathur Balasubramania Ayyar,

Vocalist, Vedaranyam Krishnamurti on violin and Ayyaru Pillai on kanjira. 'With diffidence I started with my body profusely perspiring but slowly picked up with encouragement and it ended well.' The elders had strangely withheld the fact of his making the debut till he was asked to take his seat with the mridangam!

Narayanaswami Ayyar recalls the demonstration of '*Peria Morahs*' of 35 talas, etc., at the Music Academy on December 23, 1963 at the instance of Mudicondan Venkatarama Ayyar. He has been the recipient of many gold and silver medals and the titles of —

Mridanga Jyoti	from Adyar Arogya Ashram and
Laya Marthanda Mridanga Jyoti	from the Manipal Sabha, Udipi in 1981.

Narayanaswami Ayyar has been conducting Tygaraja Aradhana for the last forty-five years with the picture of the Saint-Composer handed over to him by his sister and wife of Sarabha. Earlier he was Secretary to the 'Chinna Katchi' (Small Party) presided over by Sanjiva Rao which conducted the Aradhana for a long time separately; the 'Peria Katchi' (Bigger Party) had Azhaganambi Pillai as Secretary. Ayyar has accompanied most of the tall stalwarts of Carnatic music.

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### **TIRUVISANALLUR NARAYANASWAMI AYYAR - VOCALIST:** (20th Century early part)

A prominent vidwan well-versed in theory, Narayanaswami Ayyar was a respected vocalist. Unfortunately his voice did not match and respond to his immense musical acumen like Ettayapuram Ramachandra Ayyar and Papanasam Sivan. His high position would be clear from the fact that he gave the concert with Tirukodikāval Krishna Ayyar on violin and Palani Krishnier on ghatam for the 'seemantam' of the illustrious flautist Sarabha Sastri at Kumbakonam. Soolamangalam Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar has high respect for him.

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### **L.S. NARAYANASWAMY BHAGAVATAR - VIOLINIST:** (1908 -1970)

Father	: Lakkavalli (Chickmagalur) Chamanna.
Learnt music under	: Krishnappa, an accompanist to Chintlapalli Venkataraya.
General Education	: S.S.L.C.

Bhagavatar went over to Madras and had his advanced music training with Pallavi Narasimha Ayyangar and at Kanchipuram with Naina Pillai. In 1938, he started giving concerts and was providing accompaniment to important

musicians. He was a violinist of immense capabilities, style and knowledge. '*Apara Pandithya*' is the word used by Dr. Sampathkumaracharya in respect of him. H.V. Krishnamurti is one on whom he bestowed not only his vidwat but also his daughter. There are similar cases where the guru takes one of his intelligent disciples as a son-in-law. He had tuned the songs of D.V.Gundappa and has composed songs taking select passages from the Ramayana. In 1953, he started the Vijaya Music College at Bangalore.

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### **A.K.C. NATARAJAN - CLARIONET ARTISTE:**

**(b. May 30, 1931)**

Place of birth	:	Tiruchirapalli
Parentage	:	A.K.Chinnakrishnan, clarionet artiste and Rukmani Ammal.
Learnt music from	:	Alathur Venkatesa Ayyar of the celebrated Alathur Brothers.
Nagaswaram from	:	Illuppur Natesa Pillai and
Clarionet from	:	A.K. Chinnakrishnan (father)

Natarajan made his debut in 1946, became a staff artiste with the All India Radio, Calicut for six months in 1949 and later at New Delhi during 1950-52. He resigned his job to avail of the heavy demand for his performances nearer home. The first concert worthy of memory was at the then famous Jagannatha Bhakta Sabha, Madras and soon his prestige rose high. With his training in nagaswaram and clarionet and music from a celebrated vidwan, he was the one artiste who was competent to give classical exposition on the nonpliable clarionet with capability and merit. As is well known, few had prospered as clarionet vidwans save perhaps Abbayi and one or two others. Natarajan is able to develop and project continuity and bring out shades of raga swaroopas and swaras with maximum felicity possible on the instrument. He is very popular and his concerts are well attended.

### **Titles and Honours:**

Quite at the start of his career in 1952, he was placed on top of the highest peak of the clarionet Himalayas by the Nagaswara maestro T.N. Rajarathinam Pillai by conferring on him the title of 'Clarionet Everest' at Nagapattinam.

Clarionet Samrat by Sivananda Saraswati, Rishikesh	1958
Presentation of Gold Clarionet at Kannika Parameshwari Temple, Tiruchirapalli, which he presented to the Defence Fund	1958
Clarionet Chakravarti by the Maharaja of Mysore	1969
Isai Perarignar by Tamil Isai Sangham, Madras	1988
Madura Kala Praveena by Sadguru Sangeetha Samajam, Madurai	1989
Sangita Sagara by Visakha Music Academy, Visakhapattinam	1990
Asthana Vidwan, Dharmapuram, Tiruvaduthurai and Kanchi Kamakoti Maths.	
Honoured by the Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar Trust	1991

A.K.C. Natarajan is an eloquent exponent of Carnatic music on clarionet after clarionet Abbayi, with few competitors for over four decades.

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### **TIRUPPAMBURAM NATARAJASUNDARAM PILLAI -**

NAGASWARAM ARTISTE: (Decr. 15, 1869 - d. - )

Natarajasundaram Pillai hailed from a family of nagaswara artistes and hymnodists tracing their ancestry to Sesha Pillai of Kalyanasholapuram, a sarndha player and hymnodist. His son Kulandaivel Pillai was a veena player and his son Swaminatha Pillai (1840 - ) was a disciple of Koorainadu Ramaswami Pillai and was taken to Tiruvizhimalalai by the Mutt-head of Tiruvaduthurai. Natarajasundaram Pillai, his son along with his brother Sivasubramania Pillai had his training under Umayalpuram Doraiswami Ayyar and Sathanur Panchanadha Ayyar, two prominent musicians of the day. The advent and practice of duo nagaswaram play are attributed to Sivasubramaniam. Hitherto, it was totally raga alapana, pallavi and ragamalika rendition by nagaswaram artistes. If raga was developed to pristine heights, credit goes to them. They would start at 8 or 9 or 10 p.m. and end only with the dawn. Enchanting rendition based on melody and vicranti would flow in the still hours of the night for the music-lover and the Gods to regale themselves with. Mostly the nagaswara artistes stood standing or walking pouring out ' the nectar of Nada, which is the basis of all Vedas, Puranas, Agamas and Sastras ' ( *Nada Sudharasambilanu - Arabhi* raga of Tyagarajah ). The Tiruppamburam Brothers, for the first time, introduced quite a number of Dikshitar kritis in their play. Thus they were trail-blazers.

Poochi Srinivasa Ayyangar, Sarabha Sastri, Ramnad Rajah and Chunambedu Zamindar were special patrons and admirers. Swaminatha Pillai, the eminent flautist and Somasundaram, nagaswara teacher, were his sons. The brothers were known for perfect sruti, total alignment and captivating rendition.

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### **KUMBAKONAM NATESA DIKSHITAR- MUSICAL DISCOURSE ARTISTE:**

(19th Century II Half)

A pioneer in forming a musically-talented dramatic troupe on the lines of the marathi stage, himself composing fine nirupanams (explanatory songs) in different languages, Natesa Dikshitar was a fine composer. His father Tyagaraja Dikshitar was also a fine composer. Natesa Dikshitar was a court physician. He started the 'Jagan Mohana Chit Vilasa Sabha' for presenting concerts and dramas and got round a galaxy of talented artistes like

Raja-part Koneri Rao (for hero's role)  
 Stri-part Kalyanarama Ayyar (for heroine's role) and  
 Rakshasa-part Ramaswami Ayyar (for villain or demon roles).

Dikshitar was a popular vidwan of merit and Sarabha Sastri, the eminent flautist once gave violin support for his concert at the residence of Soolamangalam Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar.

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### **P.I. NATESA PILLAI - PERCUSSIONIST:**

**(b. 1899)**

Parents	:	Ayyaswami Pillai and Lakshmi Ammal
Training in	:	Kuppuswami Pillai.

He had accompanied eminent nagaswara vidwans and was honoured with a gold medal by Musiri Subramania Ayyar and the title of 'Kalaimamani' in 1973 by the Tamil Nadu Sangeetha Nataka Sangham, Madras.

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### **SRIMAN NATHAMUNI - CHOREOGRAPHER:**

**(c. 823 A.D.)**

A colossal work of eternal benediction to devotees was achieved by Sriman Nathamuni by collecting four thousand verses called '*Divya Prabandham*' and setting them to music. A native of Kattumannarkoil near Chidambaram, he happened to hear some hymns once and captivated by them, went round to the birth places of Nammalwar, etc., and collected them. T.S. Parthasarathy says that Nathamuni did for *Divya Prabandham* what Nambiandar Nambi rendered for *Thevaram*. Dr. U.Ve. Swaminatha Ayyar belongs to this tribe of dedicated souls of wisdom – human honeybees indeed. They collected because they could not desist from doing so and they wanted the world to be better duly benefited by their labour. They were the messengers of the Infinite.

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### **T.R. NAVANEETHAM - FLAUTIST:**

**(b. October. 16, 1922)**

Daughter of Rajamanickathammal, a 'sadir' artiste, Navaneetham was born at Tiruvidaimarudur, a place known for its musical excellence near Kumbakonam. Learnt dance and music from her mother and flute from Perunjeri Muthu Pillai. Made her debut as a flautist at the tender age of eight, has completed over sixty years of concerts and is still going strong. She enriched her musical stock and repertoire by taking guidance from celebrities like Paravakarai Srinivasa Ayyar, Kumbakonam Nagaraja Rao and Tiruppamburam Swaminatha Pillai. A devoted teacher, she had taught at the Music Colleges, Tirupati and Madras.



**Titles & Honours:**

Kuzhal Isai Arasi by Kumbakonam Rajamanickam Pillai.	
Kalaimamani by the Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram in	1969.
Honoured by Ramani Academy of Flute	1990.
Award from Muthamizh Peravai	1992.

\* \* \*

**LALGUDI NEELAMEGHAM PILLAI - VIOLINIST: (20th Cent.)**

Popularly named as 'Needumoorti' after Pallavi Gopala Ayyar's *Nattakurinji* song *Needumoorti*, which he used to play invariably in his solos, Neelamegham Pillai was the stock violin accompanist for several years to Bangalore Thayee. He was staff artiste, All India Radio upto 1942.

\* \* \*

**NIJAGUNA YOGI - COMPOSER: (c. 1560)**

Nothing about his period, parentage, training, etc., is known definitely. It is said that he switched over from administrative work to become a Siva Yogi of the Veera Saiva Cult. He was a scholar and a musicologist-composer who had written many works including *Viveka Chintamani* on Sangita Sastra dealing with sruti, swara, alankara, grama, jati and instrumental music. His compositions are in sanskrit and kannada under the signature 'Shambulinga'; and he is also called 'Nijaguna Aradhya'.

\* \* \*

**NORI NAGABHUSHANAM PANTULU - VOCALIST/VIOLINIST : (July 12, 1905 - April 1984)**

Nori Nagabhushanam Pantulu was born at Nandur in Andhra Pradesh, of Viswanatha Sastri in a family of musicians. Learnt vocal and violin under his father and later with Masulipatnam Hari Nagabhushanam for sometime. He completed the study of sanskrit, sahitya and vedas and made his debut as a musician in his tenth year. Was teacher in the then district board schools. He was giving a large number of performances and earning honours. A devotee of Tyagarajah, he conducted special festivals from 1930 to 1942 at Bapatla. He was Principal of the Government Music College, Secunderabad during 1952-1962. Was member of the Experts Committee of the Music Academy, Madras and of the Sangita Natak Academy, Andhra Pradesh.

Has composed varnas and swarajatis. The Madras Music Academy honoured him in 1972 with a Certificate of Merit.

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## THE HAUNTING SONG: POETESS' SELF-RESPECT

Hugh and Colleen Gantzer writing on the charm of Orcha near Gwalior narrate the tale (or what?) they were told:

'Rai Praveen was a courtesan, poetess and singer. The Mughal Emperor wanted her for his harem. She penned and sent a poem saying, "Crows, dogs and scavengers sup on food left over by others. Of what breed are you, My Lord". Confronted by the poem, the Emperor rescinded his order... Sometimes, you can hear her singing still from yonder mansion of hers.'

The fundamental human instinct crying for self-respect finds beautiful expression in this. The ferocity of the metaphorical categorisation had clearly impelled total disarming of the Moghul Emperor's initial overtures.

\* \* \* \* \*

## LITIGATION

Music is essentially a soft art in spite of ragas like Atana, shouting songsters and thumping percussionists. Still occasions had arisen sometimes:

- a. Mayuram Munsif Court: Disciple sued Koorainadu Natesa Pillai for discrimination among students in teaching. Suit failed. *Vide A Garland*.
- b. Bidaram Krishnappa v. Madras Artiste: Fortunately it stopped with notices.
- c. Arumugha Navalar v. Ramalinga Swamigal: Suit failed.
- d. K. B. Sundarambal Charities: Legal notices and reply were given. Result not known. The artiste had created an endowment of all her properties through a registered deed and a registered will. Unfortunately the issue had not been properly prosecuted.
- e. There were one or two concerning living artistes which are not mentioned here. Fortunately they would seem to have been settled smoothly.

\* \* \*

# P

## Dr. PADMA MURTHY - VOCALIST & MUSICOLOGIST:

(20th Cent.)

Father	:	T.S. Rajagopala Ayyangar.
Academic Qualifications	:	B.Sc. (Mysore), M.A. (Kanpur), M.Phil & Doctorate from Bangalore University.
Musical training under	:	Mysore Vasudevachar, T. Chowdiah, Puttuswamiah, Chelva Pillai Iyengar, H.S. Krishnamurthy, R.R. Keshavamurti, Sangita Sastra with Rallapalli Anantakrishna Sarma. Sangita Vidwan Diploma from the Mysore Music College.

Padma Murthy has had extensive training under renowned musicians and has been giving concerts for over three decades, taking part in seminars and conferences on music and musicology and contributing articles. Has been Professor and Head of the Department of Music, University of Bangalore. Has published the work '*Sangita Lakshana Sangraha*'.

\* \* \*

## SUCHINDRAM PADMANABHA BHAGAVATAR - VEENA VIDWAN :

(April 26, 1863 - Novr.18, 1949)

Place of birth	:	Trivandrum.
Parents	:	Suchindram Sthanu Bhagavatar, an adept in singing Ashtapadi & Lakshmi, also musically talented.
Veena training under	:	Eldest brother, Veenai Sankaranarayana alias Aiyah Bhagavatar (1846-1888). He had guidance from Palghat Parameswara Bhagavatar and Kalyana Krishna Bhagavatar.
Posts held	:	Veena Player at Mahadheva Temple, Vaikom. Music Teacher, Government Girls High Schools.
Debut	:	At the Trivandrum Navarathri Mandapam in 1876.

Padmanabha Bhagavatar was an expert in playing ragam, tanam and pallavi and was noted for the elaboration of *Kalyani*, *Surutti*, etc. ragas. A distinguished veena player, he was tutor at the Palace. The eminent tamil composer, T. Lakshmana Pillai was among his disciples.

\* \* \*

## PADMA NARAYANASWAMY - VOCALIST:

(b.1942)

Padma Narayanaswamy had her training in the erstwhile Government Music College, Madras and got her Sangeetha Vidwan Diploma in 1964 and had further

intensive training with a Government of India Cultural Scholarship under the distinguished Vocalist Musiri Subramania Ayyar. Married in 1965 K.V. Narayanaswami one of the present top vocalists who was then with the Government Music College and was her guru too therein.

She has been giving concerts on the radio and in sabhas and lends vocal support to her reputed husband in his concerts. In 1974-75, had a teaching assignment at the American Society for Eastern Arts, Berkeley, California, had participated in the Berlin Music Festival, 1977 and had given concerts in the USA, Europe and Canada. In 1984-85, she accompanied K.V. Narayanaswami to teach and perform at San Diego State University.

\* \* \*

### **PADMA VARADAN - VEENA ARTISTE:**

**(20th Cent.)**

Daughter of R. Rangaramanuja Ayyangar, the renowned musicologist, vainika, teacher, and disciple and admirer of Veena Dhanammal, Padma Varadan had the benefit of an immense musical environment and the wisdom of her father while young. In her ninth year, she started giving concerts on the All India Radio. Since then, she has given quite a number of concerts first with her distinguished father and later separately. Her veena play is soft and soothing (which her father used to favour much), satisfying, musically elevating and bhava-based. The legacy she inherited has not only been made proper use of but Padma Varadan has taken genuine efforts to enhance the merit of the same.

Concert tours:

Sri Lanka, Singapore, USA and Europe.

\* \* \*

### **TANJORE PAKKIRI PILLAI - MRIDANGAM ARTISTE:**

**(1869-1922)**

Two families of Tanjore had distinguished themselves, viz., the family of the Tanjore Quartette and that of Govindaswamy Nattuvanar. To the latter belonged Pakkiri Pillai, son of Ammalu Ammal. In days of yore, nattuvanars were all conversant with play on mridangam also. Pakkiri Pillai had his training under Kuppuswami Nattuvanar, made his debut at a musical discourse of Patti Krishna Bhagavatar and had been accompanying all harikatha exponents. Patnam Subramania Ayyar drew him out to one of his concerts and therefrom Pillai had provided accompaniment to all the top vocalists of his day.

B.M. Sundaram states that Narayana Appa appreciated the play of Pakkiri Pillai and said that it would resemble fragrant rosewater spray - soft and satisfying. Krishna Bhagavatar called him '*Sunadha Bhoopati*'. A peculiar characteristic of Pillai was that he would be seen always with his umbrella whether it be a concert or elsewhere - the Chamberlain of Tanjore!

\* \* \*

**AMMAPETTAI PAKKIRIAH PILLAI - PERCUSSIONIST:****(1874-1920)**

Parents :	Gurumurti Nayanakarakar and Naadi Ammal
Place of birth:	Deepambalpuram, Tanjore District.
Musical Training with:	Tirukkarugavur Sivagurunatha Pillai, Tavil, Tiruppamburam nagaswaram Nataraja Pillai and Srivanjiam Govinda Tavilkarar.

He was permanent accompanist on tavil for nagaswaram Mannargudi Chinna Pakkariah Pillai. Enjoyed a pleasing personality and displayed remarkable imaginative skill in dexterous rhythmic manipulations. Thanjavur Upendran, a popular mridanga vidwan was his grandson.

B.M. Sundaram states that the present practice of a senior joining the team as 'Special Tavil' was not in vogue in early times. It used to be said -

For Nagaswaram, Mannargudi Pakkiri;  
 For Tavil, Ammapettai Pakkiri and  
 For Konnakol, there is Mannargudi Pakkiri. (a different artiste).

Each had distinguished himself in his respective field and all were household names.

An incident is cited to highlight the sense of dignity and self-respect of Ammapettai Pakkariah Pillai. Pleased with the brilliant nagaswaram play of Mannargudi Pakkariah Pillai and the vibrant tavil of Ammapettai Pakkariah Pillai, the trustee of Sri Kandaswami Temple, Madras brought two golden 'thodas'. The nagaswaram artiste having received one already on his right hand, held out the left hand too and the trustee out of delicacy gave him the second too. Enraged at the slight, Tavil Pakkariah Pillai walked out of the place never to play together. Later they played together but without a shade of whisper between themselves.

" Music forgot the insult;  
 Profession ignored the slight; but  
 Self-respect held 'its' head high! "

\* \* \*

**HARIDWARAMANGALAM A.K. PALANIVEL - PERCUSSIONIST:****(b. April 10, 1948)**

Born at Haridwaramangalam, of Kumaravel Pillai and Sethukannammal, Palanivel had his training in tavil play under his father and Kalaimamani Tirucherai Muthukumaraswami Pillai. A vibrant player on tavil, he is a popular vidwan and has trained many. A front-line artiste, he has been honoured with many titles like:

Tavil Isai Tilakam,  
 Tavil Isai Kurisil,

Laya Vadya Kalanidhi and

Kalaimamani from Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram in 1980.

Concert tours:

U.S.A., Canada and Sri Lanka.

\* \* \*

**ILUPPUR PANCHAMI - TAVIL WIZARD & VOCALIST: (August 4, 1905 - March.22, 1935)**

Panchami was a versatile wizard in vocal music, tavil and kanjira. Besides he was a composer too. He had high musical connections like Iluppur Ponnuswami, his violinist uncle, Natesa Pillai, nagaswara brother, etc. By the age of six, he revealed ample signs of high promise and a glorious future. Had his training with Malaikottai Venkatachala Tavilkarar and Lalgudi Angappan.

He was a constant accompanist to Perambalur Angappan, a very prominent nagaswara vidwan. While he showed his talents at the tender age of six at Bikshandarkoil, he made his debut at the Malaikottai temple, Tiruchirapalli at the age of nine. Restless impatience to reveal his multi-faceted genius led him to different walks of musical life as indicated below:

Started career with his brother, Natesa Pillai as Tavil player.

Was with Madurai Ponnuswami Pillai in 1919 and with the *Todi* Wizard, T.N. Rajarathinam Pillai during 1924-27.

Turned a vocalist conscious of and impelled by his mellifluous voice in 1927  
Resumed tavil and kanjira play in 1929.

As a kanjira vidwan, he had accompanied prominent musicians like Dr. Semmangudi Srinivasa Ayyar. Tavil Panchami was a household name for sheer brilliance, dexterous finger-play, bristling laya expertise and innovative presentation. He was religious and wore only hand-spun khadi. There was everything that was good and great with him except a sudden twist in his career.

B.M. Sundaram states that he inherited addiction to drink during his brief tenure with T.N. Rajarathinam Pillai. Both were genuises- one in melody and the other in laya. Twenty-six year old Melody passed on its pet weakness to nineteen-year old Percussion! Percussion had to wind up its stay on earth in a decade, though Melody managed to last for three decades more. Could it be that the acquired habit hastened Panchami's untimely death? The glamorous player died at the prime of his career and Art lost much. Death due to alcoholism is Suicide and a Tragedy and here Art hastened the tragedy by imbibing the suicidal practice. *Drink is fire to sulphureous Art!* (Vide "Boom, Booze, Doom" at page 444 of 'A Garland'.)

While his popularity and place in the annals of Carnatic music are inscribed as a tavil vidwan, that he was an excellent vocalist with a mellifluous and speedy

brika voice, that the erudite musician had composed the chittaswaras now appended to *Palukavemi (Poornachandrika)*, *Niravadisukhada (Ravichandrika)*, *Sobhillu Saptaswara (Jaganmohini)* and *Mariyadagadura (Sankarabharanam)* and that Kanchipuram Naina Pillai selected him for giving vocal concert on the occasion of the marriage of his daughter are not commonly known! Such facts elevate Panchami in the estimation of admirers and he was a genius.

\* \* \*

### **TARANGAMBADI PANCHANADA AYYAR - COMPOSER: (1824 - 1874)**

A disciple of Syama Sastri and scholar, Panchanada Ayyar was a prominent composer. A devotee of Lord Vighneswara he adopted the signature 'Danti Mukha Janani' and 'Panchanada'.

The following are among his compositions:

Arabhimana	Ragamalika in 16 ragas
Birana Brova Yide	Kalyani
Sarasijanetra	Kalakada (13)
Palimpavamma	Mukhari

\* \* \*

### **PAPA CHUDAMANI alias SITALAKSHMI: VOCALIST: (1936 - 1978)**

Father	Choodamani Sastri
Guru	Ambi Subramania Bhagavatar.
Debut	Bangalore Town Hall in her eleventh year.

Papa Choodamani had given concerts on the All India Radio and elsewhere. Had a melodious voice and a good sweep of the upper octave.

Title: Gana Visaradhe by the Mysore Maharaja in 1965.

\* \* \*

### **PARSVADEVA - MUSICOLOGIST: (c. 1250 A.D.)**

After Sarngadeva, author of *Sangita Ratnakara*, Parsvadeva is a prominent authority and it would appear that he was a near- contemporary of Sarngadeva. While Sarngadeva does not quote him, Simha Bhoopala refers to him, says Dr. V.S. Sampathkumaracharya of Mysore. Dr. V. Raghavan has stated that the musicologist would have lived between 1165 and 1330 A.D.

Parsvadeva has authored the work *Sangita Samayasara* which deals with raganga, bhashanga, upanga classification of ragas and the lakshanas of forty-three popular ragas of the period. Seventy-five slokas deal with ragas and the author styles himself as an 'Ocean of Music'.

\* \* \*

**TIRUVALAPUTHUR PASUPATHIA PILLAI - TAVIL ARTISTE:****(1879 - Octr. 1958)**

Son of bharata natya artiste Ammani Ammal, Pasupathia Pillai had his training under Achalpuram Dharmalinga Tavilkarar (father of the eminent Chidambaram Vaidyanatha Pillai) and the eminent Ammachatram Kannuswami Pillai - (*Vide* page 106 and 396 - *A Garland*). Pasupathia Pillai was very popular and was one of the top tavilkars but was incapacitated at the peak of his fortunes, blood oozing out from his fingers if he struck or played! He was forced to be a teacher and among his disciples were Nachiarkoil Raghava Pillai and Tiruvalaputhur Kaliyamurti.

\* \* \*

**M.P. PERIASWAMI @ Pe.THooran - COMPOSER : (Sept. 26, 1908 -)**

Place of birth : Modakurichi / Manjakattuvalasu in Coimbatore district.  
Parentage : Palanivelappa Gounder and Paavaathal.

A born teacher, patriot and a composer of merit, Periaswami Thooran is a respected figure. He was greatly influenced and inspired by Mahakavi Subramania Bharati. He declined to sit for his examination for Bachelor of Arts shocked by the execution of the immortal Bhagat Singh, a prince among patriots by the British. (*Vide* the life of K.B. Sundarambal for a like reaction.) Thooran qualified later passing B.A., L.T. A voracious writer, he composed over six hundred songs on national, spiritual and moral issues. He wrote 'a poem a day' for several years after his daily poojahs. His song '*Adu Ratte*' was a clarion patriotic call which was widely in current use during the Freedom Struggle. He became popular and the melody queen N.C. Vasantakokilam included this piece in her concerts invariably. (It is unfortunate that the sublime atmosphere that prevailed during the Freedom Movement is a mirage now. One has just to recollect Subramania Bharati's *Thanneer Vitto Valartom* and other songs.) A precocious child and later a man with noble ideals, Thooran is an acknowledged poet and composer. Analogous to Tyagarajah's '*Santhamulekha, Soukyamu ledhu*', Thooran's '*Santhamillamal sukham undo?*' (*Nattakurinji*) stresses that there is no joy without patience and no contentment amidst worries. Deep philosophical truths lay hidden in his simple devotional songs. Musical aesthetics and bhava find abundant evidence in his compositions.

With profound poetic talents, he had to seek like Arunachala Kavirayar outside help to set his songs to tune as he was not a musician. He availed of the services of Sivaramakrishna Ayyar as guru and choreographer. (Sivaramakrishnan was born in 1913 at Mavelikara in Kerala and had joined Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya as music teacher in 1937.) Thooran had also availed of the services of senior musicians like K.V. Narayanaswamy, T.M. Theagarajan, T.K. Govinda Rao and T.V. Sankaranarayanan to set his songs to music.



Eminent musicians like Tiger Varadachariar, Musiri Subramania Ayyar and Semmangudi Srinivasa Ayyar had spoken highly of his compositions. His songs have been brought out in five volumes titled '*Isai Mani Manjari*'. Annamalai University, Alliance Company, Tamil Isai Sangham and Tamil Writers' Association have brought out his works. His publications include '*Thooran Stories*' (1962), '*Nalla Nalla Pattu*' (1965) '*Call of the Wild*' and '*Bharati*' for children.

His claim to fame rests on his memorable contributions to tamil. He was Chief Editor, Tamil Encyclopaedia during 1948-1978 and the encyclopaedia went into ten huge volumes. The credit for bringing out the first-ever Children's Encyclopaedia in tamil in ten volumes also goes to him. His life was one of fulfilment and enduring contribution of intellectual excellence. The moral code of conduct he set for himself was high. When T.S. Avinashilingam Chettiar granted him a salary of Rs.thirty, he took only Rs.fifteen per mensem. This reminds one of the former Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Sastri, Gottuvadyam Sakharama Rao and Violin Sundaesa Ayyar of Tiruvalangadu and men of such unstained galactic stream.

### Posts held:

Teacher in Gobichettipalayam	- 4 years.
Warden & Teacher, Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya, Perianaickenpalayam	- 15 years.
Chief Editor, Tamil Encyclopaedia	- 1948 - 1978.
Chief Editor, Tamil Kalai Kalanjiam, a prestigious journal.	

### Honours and Titles:

Padma Bhushan	by President of India	1968
Isai Perarignar	by Tamil Isai Sangham	1972
Kalaimamani	by T.N. Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram	1970
Annamalai Chettiar Award	by MAC Charities	1978

Thooran's multi-sided interests covered the deliberations and activities of –

The All India Radio,  
Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram.,  
Tamil Isai Sangham ,  
Central College of Carnatic Music,  
Tamil Kalluri, etc.

\* \* \*

### R. PICHUMANI - VAINIKA:

(b. May 18, 1920)

Born in a family of musicians, R. Pichumani had training in vocal music under Jalra Gopala Ayyar at the age of ten and later veena with Tiruchi Kuppanna. At the age of fifteen he won the prize for Carnatic Vocal at the National College. Became a 'Sangeetha Bhooshanam' of the Annamalai University under the

stalwarts Tiger Varadachariar, K.S. Narayanaswami Ayyar and V.S. Gomati Sankara Ayyar. 'On the foundations of the intensive training received there, he built for himself a distinct Classical Carnatic aesthetics enduring the pressures thrust on him by the materially rich and gorgeous world of cine-music in which he had to serve for a number of years during his early years.' (R.V.)

For nearly five decades, Pichumani has been a dedicated sampradaya vainika having given over 1500 concerts on the radio, doordarshan, sabhas, etc. He is a respected vidwan known for unruffled rendition at once satisfying and soothing.

### Posts held :

Secretary, Tiruvaiyaru Tyaga Brahmotsava Sabha (1980)  
 Selection Committee Member and Chief Examiner for Vidwan courses in  
 State Music Colleges.  
 Faculty Member and Board Member for Practical Examinations,  
 Annamalai University.

### Honours & titles:

Shanmughavadivu Award (twice) from the Music Academy, Madras.  

Kalaimamani & Gold medal	by the Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram	1970-71.
Sangeetha Ratnam	by Bharatha Natya Academy	1959.
Veena Nada Mani	by H.H. Sankaracharya of Kanchi	1982.
Veena Praveena Award	by Santhome Arts Academy. by Sangeet Natak Akademy , Delhi	1989
Sangita Kala Nipuna	by Mylapore Fine Arts	1991.

 (Veenai Vithagar, Veenai Isai Vithagar & Nadakanal are the other titles.)

R. Pichumani has composed swarajatis, varnam, javalis and a tillana and has invented the raga, *Vasantha Kaisiki*. Has trained many disciples including his sons, P. Viswanathan of the All India Radio and P. Chandrasekharan, a professional veena player.

### Disc recordings:

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### K. PONNIAH PILLAI - COMPOSER-PEDAGOGUE: (1888 - June 30, 1945)

A family of eminent musicians, dance masters, composers and teachers of Tanjore with its high watermark in the illustrious Tanjore Quartette has given successive waves of artistes. The present generation includes K.P. Kittappa Pillai and K.P. Sivanandam Pillai. Their father, Ponniah Pillai was born at Pandanallur, of Kannuswami Pillai, a dance master then at Baroda. He had his training in —

Music, dance and mridangam	:	with Pandanallur Meenakshisundaram Pillai - 15 years;
Tamil, telugu, etc.	:	under competent instructors and
Advanced music	:	under Palghat Anantarama Ayyar and Tiruvotriyur Tyagayyar.

Ponniah Pillai had learnt mridangam under T.R. Vaidyanatha Ayyar also. After training, he joined his father, who had then returned from Baroda to Tanjore, in teaching music and dance. Tanjore Vaidyanatha Ayyar, the percussion stalwart was among the disciples.

Ponniah Pillai was Lecturer, Music College of the Annamalai University taking both vocal and mridangam classes. The University had then a number of distinguished musicians and Pillai's teaching acumen attracted considerable appreciation. K.S. Narayanaswamy, Veena Vidwan states that 'we would attend his mridangam classes whenever we did not have our own'. It indicates the genial attitude and the teaching acumen of the master. Was Member, Madras Music Academy Experts Committee and the Syndicate of the Madras University. He had presided over numerous conferences.

Compositions	:	Jatiswarams, Tana Varnas, Kirtanas & Tillanas.
Tour	:	Sri Lanka where he held summer classes.
Publications	:	Isai Eyal Seyalmurai Isai Nool Tanjore Peruvudayan Perisai (containing the songs of his ancestors).

His songs were published in the University publication titled '*Rajah Annamalai Karuvoolam*' in 1949 by his sons. He was closely involved in the Tamil Isai Movement and had presided over the Tamil Isai Conference in 1941.

The Music Academy conferred on him the title of 'Sangita Kalanidhi' in 1933. Ponniah Pillai composed the initial ten 'adavus' with 120 subdivisions for bharatanatya, besides framing the model programme for dance concerts with alarippu, jatiswaram, sabdam, pada varnam, swarajati, padam, ragamalika, sloka and tillana.

The most interesting fact about his family is that many of them were experts in the triple field of music, dance, and composition. Ancestry is traced to Gangaimuthu of Sankaranarkoil, who with his brother Ramalingam, was in the service of Maharajah Thulajah of Tanjore. The genealogy passes through Subbarayan, Sivanandam of the Quartette, Sabapathi and Kannuswami to Ponniah Pillai. The great lakshana vidwan who was a distinguished teacher and composer was a good mridangam player too.

**PUNDARIKA VITTALA - MUSICOLOGIST:****(c.1510 - 1576)**

Vittala is the author of the quartet of works:

*Shadraga Chandrodayam ,  
Nartana Nirnayam ,  
Ragamala and  
Ragamanjari.*

The first work gives details of his biography. He was born at a place called Sathanur near a hill known as Saivagangamalai, of Vittalarya and Nagamba in about 1510 A.D. Probably he derived his name after the name of the local deity, Vittalarayaswami or Vittala Gopalaswamy. He was a scholar in sanskrit and kannada and well-versed in dance and music. The odd factor in his life is that he did not shine in that abode of art and culture, Vijayanagar but had to migrate to Anandavalli, capital of Khandesh ruled by Burhan Khan for patronage. *Shadraga Chandrodayam* is dedicated to this patron. Then he was at Gwalior with Rajah Mansingh Tomwar and at Delhi patronised by Mana Simha and Madhava Simha, who are referred to by Vittala in his *Raganirnayam*. At Delhi he was patronised by Emperor Akbar, to whom *Narthana Nirnayam* was dedicated. The work *Ragamala* was completed on July 30, 1576. He has described and praised sixty-six ragas in slokas. T.S. Parthasarathy says :

' Perhaps he is the only theoretician who was well-versed in both the systems - Raga Ragini and Mela systems. He was able to secure a respectable place at Ahmednagar, Gwalior and Delhi. '

Why his native kingdom failed to provide him with a congenial berth is left to conjectures.

\* \* \*

**PURNACHANDRA - VOCALIST/VIOLINIST/MUSICAL DISCOURSER:****(b.1943)**

Born at Hyderabad, Purnachandra had knowledge of telugu from his father and kannada from his mother. Learnt the themes and art of musical discourse from his mother. Learnt music from Tirumalachariar and Balasubramania Bhagavatar. Was noted for his musical discourses. Was employed in Central Government.

**Honours & Titles :**

Nataka Bhushanam, Gayaka Ratna Sudha Nidhi,  
Bala Bhagavata, besides medals.

\* \* \*

**MADURAI PUSHPAVANAM - VOCALIST****(1885 - August 1917)**

'A handsome stripling with a curious coiffure that subsequently became the fashion among his fans, clad in spotless white muslin with loose sleeves flying about, with eyes closed and the music! What an intoxicating voice, responding readily, with incredible ease and grace, to the surging crescendo of ravishing, sophisticated music conjured up from a highly imaginative mind! And how the audience rocked and swayed as if in a trance',

observes R. Rangaramanuja Ayyangar of Pushpavanam of Madurai, a disciple of one of the renowned teachers of yester years, Ettayapuram Ramachandra Bhagavata. The teacher prayed for a disciple who would blend his unmatched expertise with a divine voice and Pushpavanam was the answer and gift to him.

Pushpavanam was a musical discovery, a treasure-trove. The 'Flower-garden', which the name of the vocalist actually means, was a veritable garden of raga, tana, pallavi, kriti and swara and he was a master of concerts with few to challenge; but unfortunately, he passed away too soon leaving an undying name and fame. His daughter, Rajam was a vocalist and Sangita Kalanidhi Madurai Mani Ayyar was his nephew.

In a tribute, Dr. Srinivasa Ayyar says that Pushpavanam's music was 'as attractive as his personality... effortless... His voice was his *forte* and audience listened with pin-drop silence'. He writes in the *Journal of the Music Academy* that Pushpavanam developed raga alapana leisurely, that his wonderful voice was noted for power and sinuous beauty and that it was difficult to see or talk to him. Pushpavanam would go away the minute the concert was over. As I write this sentence on September 5, 1991, a news item in the '*Hindu*' reveals:

'Most of the top tennis players don't hang out. They go, they play and they leave. Everybody has his own entourage and keeps to themselves! – (Gigi Fernandez)

'We don't talk. Just say "Hi". I just walk by and they walk by me. That is the whole contact we have.' — Monica Seles.

(No wonder it is so. Tennis brings staggering prize money in astronomical figures even for defeats!)

Soolamangalam Vaidyanatha Bhagavata, the celebrated musical discoursesman wrote long back in '*Kalki*':

'Pushpavanam's voice was a gift of Heaven. No accompanist is required to render his concert memorable.

Musicians' remuneration at that time went up only because of his stringent

attitude. He stipulated and got what he wanted. Sometimes, the host-organiser would pay double the stipulated sum captivated by the scintillating music of the artiste. Was a little conceited. Once all the great musicians had come for a function but he did not come as his stipulation had not been confirmed. Only on receipt of a telegram, he chose to come. And finally, he got a double of that amount, the host surrendering to the magical wizardry of his matchless melody!

\* \* \*

### PUTTARAJA GAVAI - MULTI-SIDED INSTRUMENTALIST:

(b.1914)

Place of birth : Deogiri in Haveri taluk, Karnataka.  
Parents : Revayya and Siddamma.

A distinguished instrumentalist and composer, Puttaraja Gavai was born blind and is a disciple of Chandrasekhara of Venkatapura Hiray Mata who was a disciple of the celebrated Panchakshari Gavai. In fact the Gadag Punyashrama is stated to have been started by Panchakshari Gavai and Puttaraja Gavai. Probably both had played a great and noble role in the life of that institution. Learnt violin from Raghavendracharya. Puttaraja is a genius who can also handle harmonium, sarangi, dilruba, sitar, tabla, etc. He belongs to the select band of great musicians who were or are blind but had found no inhibition on that account in achieving expertise and high image in the field of music. (*Vide 'A Garland' on blind bards.*)

Puttaraja has brought out many works and dramas like –

Sivasarana Chinnayya,  
Sevati Matsara,  
Nallur.Nambiyakka,  
Stri Jivana,  
Akkamma Devi Purana (in Shatpadi metre).

Kannada was his medium but his *Guru Gita* is in sanskrit and *Basava Purana* is in hindi. Had many disciples.

Honours & Titles : State Sangita Academy Award 1962  
Ubhaya Vadhana Kanthirava  
Ubhaya Gayanacharya  
Sangita Sahitya Ratna, etc.

\* \* \*

### M. PUTTASWAMAYYA - PERCUSSIONIST:

(20th Century)

Father and guru : Mare Gowda  
Further musical training under : Rangachar, Ananta Sastri & Bidaram Krishnappa

Mridangam training  
under : Muthuswamy Devar of Mysore.  
Place of birth : Tagadur village, Narsipur taluk.

Started with tabla and took to mridangam later. Made his debut playing his guru Bidaram Krishnappa in his fifteenth year and has been having a practice. Puttaswamayya is one of Karnataka's elder mridangists.

### Honours & Titles:

Sangita Ratna By Maharaja Chamaraja Wodeyar  
Gana Kala Sindhu By Mysore Sangita Sammelan  
Gana Kala Ratna By Mysore Gana Kala Parishad  
Sangeet Natak Academy Award 1962

Puttaswamayya was the President of Mysore Kalabhivardini Sabha and started the Kanakadasa Vidyarthi Nilaya, Nanjangud.

\* \* \*

### T. PUTTASWAMAYYA - VOCALIST:

(b.19

Parentage : Tirumukkudal Agastya Gowd & Sundaramma.  
(A brother of T. Chowdiah, the renowned violinist.)  
Musical Preceptor : Bidaram Krishnappa for six years.  
Debut : At Sri Ram Temple, Nanjangud with brother T. Chowdiah on violin and Mysore Muthuswamy Devar on mridangam.

A traditionalist, Puttaswamayya was noted for his raga exposition and precise elaboration. Has trained many disciples. Puttaswamayya was Professor of Music, University of Bangalore.

### Honours & Titles:

Honoured by Nalwadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar, Mysore 1938  
Gana Vidya Varidhi by Mysore Sabha 1969  
Gana Kala Ratna by Kala Parishad, Bangalore  
Sangeet Natak Academy Award. 1971

### Disc recordings:

\* \* \* \* \*

### IT IS GURUKULAVASA

'Example is the school of mankind and they will learn at no other.'

— Edmund B

\* \* \*

## LEAF AS A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

- i. The tamil adage says, '*Vallavanuṅku pullum ayudham*' (Even a grass blade is a mighty weapon to the strong). Nikhil Mohanto presents exquisite music with a leaf covering alapana and songs producing the sound of a shenoi. (Doordarshan — October 23, 1990)
- ii. Tulasiram Bhimrao Sutar of Lanjwad, Bidar, Karnataka gives thirty-minute programmes with a fresh leaf.

\* \* \*

## MULTIFACETS OF MUSIC:

- i. Music is a fine art to the art-lover for entertainment and enlightenment;  
     a profession and means of livelihood to the musician;  
     an accoustic phenomenon and a science on sound for the  
     musicologist; but it is  
     *Nada Yoga* or *Nadopasana*, the worship of *Nada Brahman* and  
     the easiest way to salvation for saints and philosophers from  
     Yajnavalkya to Tyagaraja.

— T.S. Parthasarathy.

- ii. 'There is a wrong belief that Carnatic music is Brahmin-oriented music. Actually it owes as much to non-Brahmins as to Brahmins. According to Manu, a Brahmin can only teach music but not take it up as a profession. ' \*

'Most vidwans and vidushis fail to build over the great compositions their own. These compositions which are the backbone and glory of Carnatic music have become more a hindrance than a help to their creativity.'

'It is time we had second thoughts on the Ariyakudi paddhati followed in recitals. I personally think it has done incalculable damage to Carnatic music... Unfortunately it has put the system into a strait-jacket and spelt disaster to the musicians' creativity. He is now compelled to pack a dozen items into a recital... He has lost his freedom when freedom is the essence of our music.'

— RGK in Indian Express

\* \* \* \*

\* Note: Such canards were spread by imperialist stooges and vested interests even regarding independence movement, satyagraha and Indian National Congress then.



# R

## VALADI RADHAKRISHNA AYYAR - VIOLINIST:

(1849 - 1908)

Son and disciple of Rama Ayyar of Lalgudi, Radhakrishna Ayyar was a popular figure who enjoyed a large circle of admirers including the Rajah of Ramnad where he was asthana vidwan. He brought up his sons, Madurai Kandaswami Bhagavatar (1890 - 1939) and V.R. Gopala Ayyar (1900 - 1979) as violinists. (While the former settled at Vaigai-fed Pandyan Madurai, the latter chose to remain at his ancestral, Cauvery-fed Chola village of Lalgudi.) He was a flautist too and ran a music school at Lalgudi. Inspired by a Swamiji, he took to asceticism and set up an ashram at picturesque Kallidaikurichi on the banks of Tambraparni praised by Muthuswami Dikshitar in his song *Sri Kantimatim (Desi Simharava raga)*, as *Suddha Tamraparni*. An anguished mother went, got his release and brought him back to family life. In an old photo, Lalgudi Radhakrishna Ayyar shares the stage with his violin on play along with Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar, Patnam Subramania Ayyar and Poochi Srinivasa Ayyangar (all vocalists), Tanjore Narayanaswami Appa with his mridangam and Umayalpuram Narayanaier with his ghatam. That shows his rank.

\* \* \*

## T.K. RADHAKRISHNAN - FLAUTIST:

(b. July 14, 1919)

Father T.G. Krishna Ayyar was the author of '*Lalitha Dasar Kirthanas*' and mother was Annapurani Ammal. Born in a musical family, Radhakrishnan had his training in flute with the famous Palladam Sanjeeva Rao and theory under his grandfather T.A. Krishna Bhagavatar. For his concerts, Radhakrishnan had been accompanied by eminent violinists like T. Chowdiah, Rajamanickam Pillai, Govindaraja Pillai and Pappa Venkataramiah. The flautist was honoured with the title of 'Kalaimamani' by the Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram in 1978.

\* \* \*

## RADHA VISWANATHAN - VOCALIST:

(b. Decr 15, 1934)

Flower and fragrance, word and its meaning and several such combinations are noticed for harmonious, homogenous blending of two in one. It is so with Radha Viswanathan, the Yamuna which merges and dissolves its musical talents in the melodic Ganges of Prof. M.S. Subbulakshmi. The tendril revolves around the stem but retains its identity. In Radha's case, it is Jeevathma joining the Paramathma - two voices in total absolute blend rendering melody more melodious. At Dhanushkodi or Kanyakumari, the Bay of Bengal meets the Indian

composite whole. The dissolved sugar can be separated but the dissolved rendition of Radha does not lend itself to this process. That is its intrinsic merit! Daughter of Sadasivam, she could not have wished for a better exposure to art and music. Music made her home its favourite prime abode and so Radha had minimum need for formal training in the usual sense of the term. Do fisher boys attend swimming classes?

T.R. Balasubramaniam gave her some lessons while Ramnad Krishnan and Mayavaram Krishna Ayyar taught her a little. Step-mother M.S. Subbulakshmi and Radha jointly learnt padas from T. Brinda and kritis from Semmangudi Dr. Srinivasa Ayyar. The school of Musiri Subramania Ayyar lent some training. The step mother's influence was so affluent that Radha was quite soon an accomplished vocalist. More than for her solo concerts, Radha is known much as the voice-support of M.S. Subbulakshmi. The mutual affection and love and the unique exposure of Radha from childhood to the music of M.S.S. so shaped the music of the two that it came to be the glory of Classical Carnatic music. To the accustomed eye, MSS without Radha looked like Saraswati without veena. Radha learnt bhārata natyam also from Vazhuvur Ramiah Pillai and the 'arangetram' was in 1945.

Radha had her stint in-films while young as —  
 six year old Bharata in M.S.S.' "Sakuntala" and as  
 baby Meera in M.S.S.musical extravaganza "Meera".

Radha fell ill seriously and had a miraculous recovery. Here is a description by Gowri Ramnarayan in 'Sruti' on a benefit performance of M.S.S. on March, 12, 1983:

Half way through the recital the unexpected happens. The curtain drops - in the midst of a Classical Carnatic Music programme? When it rises, there was Radha.'

It was her first appearance after her illness and there was universal welcome to her coming back to the concert stage. A world of sympathy was with her aiding her recovery.

\* \* \*

**Dr. V. RAGHAVAN** - EMINENT MUSICOLOGIST:

**(1908 - 1979)**

A giant among musicological sanskritists, Dr. V. Raghavan's contributions in the twin fields of sanskrit and Carnatic music are substantial and immense. His writings cover a wide spectra and the output is not only classic but authoritative. He edited the *Journal of the Music Academy* from 1935 to 1979, the souvenirs of the Academy Annual Conferences from 1943 to 1978 and the Music Academy series of songs in notation, etc. The bibliography of his published works cover:

Books and Monographs	15
Articles on Sangita	38
Articles on Trinity	25
Articles on Non-Trinity Composers	28
Articles on musical instruments	21
Articles on music, dance and fine arts	57

An *aasu kavi* (spontaneous composer), his original compositions include *Sri Ramanatha Suprabhatam*, *Meenakshi Suprabhatam*, *sabdas* and *kirtanas*. The *Suprabhatams* are noted for poetic, vedantic and devotional excellence and he wrote an entire *kavya* on Muthuswami Dikshitar for which Sri Sankaracharya of Kanchi awarded the title of 'Kavi Kokila'. The other title conferred on him was 'Sakala Kala Kalapa'. His analysis of the life of Tyagaraja in '*The Heritage of Tyagaraja*' is classic and could scarcely be excelled in its reach and depth.

I had the privilege of instituting the recitation of *Sri Ramanatha Suprabhatam* at the famous symbol of emotional and spiritual integration of India, Sri Ramanathaswami temple, Rameswaram in 1966 and he was very much pleased at that and 'He' too should have approved His first servant's (the author's) action.

Dr. Raghavan was a Founder-Member of the Music Academy and played a great distinguished role in its development and in the deliberations of the Experts Committee.

\* \* \*

**PALGHAT R. RAGHU - MRIDANGAM MAESTRO:**

**(b.Jany 9, 1928)**

Kerala enjoys the privilege with Burma (Myanmar) of producing quality teak and the Keralite percussion maestro, Palghat Raghu was born at Burma. One of the top mridangam artistes, Raghu has developed a distinct style of his own full of technical excellence, effortless fingering and innovative vibrancy and display. He claims that his training initially under Tinniam Venkatarama Ayyar and later under the percussion wizard Palghat Mani endowed him with the rich artistic heritage left behind by Tanjore Vaidyanatha Ayyar. Raghu is a respected mridangist acknowledged for his vibrant dexterity and artistic brilliance. He is a Graduate in Mathematics. Mathematics and music have close consanguinity from ancient times.

His concert tours abroad include –

U.K. in 1960 at the invitation of Yehudi Menuhin to participate in the Bath Festival;

U.K. in 1963 to perform at the Edinburgh International Festival;

U.S.A. in 1965 as Visiting Professor, Wesleyan University when he gave several concerts with Pandit Ravi Shankar and Ustad Alla Rakha - a combination of mridangam and tabla for sitar;

U.S.A., Australia, Singapore and Europe either for teaching or for concerts.

### Honours and Titles:

Sangeetha Choodamani by Sri Krishna Gana Sabha, Madras	1978
Fellowship of Sangeet Nataka Academy, Kerala	1980
Palghat Mani Ayyar Award	1983
Sangeet Natak Akademy Award	1983
Padma Sri by the President of India	1984
Mridanga Chakravarti by Cleveland Association	
Kalaimamani by Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram	1992.

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### B.S. RAJA AYYANGAR - VOCALIST:

(1900 - 1980)

Sweet melody, pleasing invigorating voice with a tinge of the feminine grace and felicity in rendition, smooth and captivating tempo, measured brikas and lakshya predominance qualified the singing of B.S. Raja Ayyangar. His voice traversed the upper octave with elegant ease and timbre. His disc '*Jagadoddharana*' was the rage of the thirties and even the hurrying feet paused for a few moments to catch a glimpse of the captivating music. If S.G. Kittappa electrified the dramatic stage in Tamil Nadu, Raja Ayyangar did the like of it on the concert stage. '*Ksheerasagara*' (*Devagandhari*) was another favourite of his.

Born at : Banavar village in Arisikere district in Karnataka

Initial training he had with his maternal uncle and then joined the dramatic company of Varadachari of Mysore and learnt music from Harmonist Chama Rao. Popularity crowned him soon and recognition was quick to reach him. He had a round of advanced training under K.V. Srinivasa Ayyangar of the Tiger Brothers. Made his debut at Egmore. (Was it at the Jagannatha Bakta Sabha?) He had the distinction of singing at the Akhil Bharath Sangeet Sammelan, Madras in 1927 which was a landmark in the annals of Indian Music. For three decades he held his high stature and won many laurels having made his entry at the Travancore Palace in 1924, at the Mysore Palace in 1928, the Music Academy in 1932, and distant Karachi in 1936.

### Honours and Titles:

Many medals  
State Sangeet Natak Academy Award 1967  
Karnataka Gana Kala Parishat - Gana Kala Bhooshana in 1970  
Gana Kala Nidhi and other titles.

He has donned the role of Narada in the film '*Satya Harischandra*'.

### Disc recordings.

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**V. RAJKUMAR BHARATI - VIOLINIST:****(b. June 24, 1958)**

Parents	:	P.S.V. Subramanian and Lalitha Bharati
General Qualification	:	B.E. (Electronics & Communication)
Musical training under:		Initially his mother, Valliyur Gurumurthy - 12 years Dr. Balamurali Krishna - 2 years T.V. Gopalakrishnan during the last ten years - both Carnatic classical and Hindustani classical.
Debut	:	1974 for a marriage 1976 Indian Fine Arts Society, Madras.

Rajkumar Bharati is a popular artiste who commands a rich, vibrant voice and graceful rendition. He brings out a rich crop of gamakas and embellishments in his rendition. Has given about seven hundred concerts on the All India Radio, Doordarshan and sabhas. Has been accompanied by distinguished violinists and percussionists. He expresses his gratitude to T.V. Gopalakrishnan, his guru, for the immense interest taken by him in his progress.

Concert tours:	USA, UK, Singapore and Malaysia.
Honours:	Asthana Vidwan, Shri Datta Peetam, Mysore.

Disc recordings: (Devotional and light classical).

Rajkumar Bharati is the great grandson of the immortal National Poet, Subramanya Bharati and like his illustrious ancestor, he quit his job, not for politics (since India is independent and there is no struggle for its liberation), but to devote his time and energy to promote the welfare and culture of mankind.

\* \* \*

**Prof. RAJALAKSHMI NARAYANAN - VEENA ARTISTE: (b.Aug.31, 1928)**

Master of Arts in Indian Music with special diploma in music, Rajalakshmi Narayanan has been giving veena and vocal concerts on the All India Radio and elsewhere and demonstrations at seminars. A number of students from America have been specially trained by her in veena. She is Professor in Veena at the Government Carnatic Music Training Centre, Madras.

\* \* \*

**RAJALAKSHMI RAGHAVAN - VEENA ARTISTE: (b. February 25, 1942)**

World War II was on. The Japanese were advancing towards India. Just within a week or two, Madras was to be bombed. Thousands of families had evacuated Madras for rural centres. Tanjore was then humming with local people and the fresh arrivals. Rajalakshmi Raghavan was then born at Tanjore. Mother had been trained by Veena Seshanna of

Mysore. Her sisters are all well trained and two of them were giving concerts.

Rajalakshmi joined the Central College of Carnatic Music in 1961- 62 and had her veena-main under the renowned Devakottai A. Narayana Ayyangar. She got the diploma securing the first rank. Had taken the Teachers' Training Certificate.

Was veena teacher at the Tiruvaiyaru Government Music College (1965-1980) and is Lecturer in Veena at the Government Music College, Madurai since 1980. She has given numerous concerts on the All India Radio, sabhas, etc. and has been celebrating Tyagaraja Aradhana on a lavish scale at Madurai.

\* \* \*

### **RAJALAKSHMI THIRUNARAYANAN - VOCALIST: (20th Cent.)**

Rajalakshmi Thirunarayanan hails from a family of musicians of Mysore. Had taken the Master's Degree in Music in 1967 from the Mysore University. She is a Lecturer in the Bangalore University. Had undergone training with V. Venkatagiri, Lalgudi Jayaraman and Prof. R.N. Doreswamy, having started her training at the early age of seven. She has been giving concerts for Doordarshan, All India Radio and others. Has authored the book '*Music Theory*', a text for the Senior Grade Music Examination in Karnataka.

\* \* \*

### **TIRUVARUR (KUNJU) RAJAGOPALA AYYAR - MRIDANGAM ARTISTE: (1900 - Decr. 27, 1971)**

Place of birth	:	Kurumbal near Tiruvarur
Name of father	:	Swaminatha Ayyar.
Percussion training	:	Ghatam under Talagnayar Gopala Ayyar & Kodimangalam Narayanaswami Ayyar Mridangam under Tiruvarur Kuppanna Rao

Rajagopala Ayyar started with ghatam and moved over to mridangam. Had worked as teacher for mridangam at the Kalakshetra and at the Music Trinity Sabha, Tiruvarur. He was doing '*Nadopasana*' playing on mridangam in a Radha Kalyana Mahotsavam when he died in harness as the '*harati*' was being shown. Tiruvarur Nagarajan, his son, plays mridangam and kanjira.

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### **R.A. RAJAGOPALAN - PERCUSSIONIST: (b.December 20, 1952)**

Place of birth	:	Bangalore
Parents	:	Father R.A. Krishnamacharya, Retired Professor, Sanskrit College, Bangalore and a Harikatha Vidwan

and mother R.A.Rajalakshmi.  
 Training : Training in mridangam under T.A.S. Mani, Karnataka College of Percussion, Bangalore and subsequently in ghatam.

Rajagopalan made his debut in 1968 at Bangalore and has been providing accompaniment to leading vidwans mainly in ghatam. Now he is Staff Artiste, All India Radio, Bangalore.

### Concert tours:

With 'Tala Tarangini' of T.A.S. Mani and with his sister-vocalist, R.A. Ramamani.

### Disc recordings.

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## S. RAJAM - MUSICIAN & ARTIST:

(b. February 10, 1919)

### The Musician:

1984 February - Ettayapuram - Muthuswami Dikshitar Aradhana. It is well known that Dikshitar in his *Anandamrutha Karshini* in raga *Amruthavarshini* appealed to Amruteswari for instant rains (*Varshaya, Varshaya*) and brought copious rains to the rain-fed but rain-starved, black-cotton, flat terrain in and around Ettayapuram during his last journey. February is the beginning of summer when the Aradhana Festival is held. S. Rajam sang the Dikshitar song with devotion at 10 a.m. and was taken to Tirunelveli by the Collector for lunch. When he returned at about 4 p.m., lo! the pandal was not there and Ettayapuram stood soaked in torrential rains. The pandal had been blown off during the cyclonic rains at noon. Rajam merely invoked the grace of Dikshitar but the Rain-God took it as an invocation from Dikshitar himself and true to the spirit of the song came down to the delight of farmers and the dismay of organisers and music-lovers!

Rajam's *Raga Lakshana* columns in magazine 'Sruti' is a distinct piece of comprehensive elucidation of individual ragas.

### The Actor:

'Sita Kalyanam' was perhaps the third talkie in Tamil. Rajam (14) was the Prince Charming who took sister Jayalakshmi (12) as spouse in the film. The brother-sister team as Rama and Sita brought forth virulent criticism from orthodoxy: but at many places people went crazy and honoured the boy and the girl with coco and camphor offerings as if the Lord Himself had come down with his divine consort. Rajam - Jayalakshmi were either too young to understand the protests or sang -

"Oh Ramachandra ! Why should we feel any concern , when you hold in your hands the leading strings of all the dolls in the drama you conduct?"  
 ( *Makelara Vicharamu - Ravichandrika* )

His second sister acted as Urmila. Advocate - Father Sundaram Ayyar was Janaka - probably fed up being a father at home! Veena Balachander, the child prodigy, performed on the kanjira in the Court of the great Ravana! G.K. Seshagiri Ayyar, music enthusiast was Ravana.

## The Artiste

Rajam's mother was the inspiration. Surgical supremo Dr. Rangachari's scholarship enabled Rajam to undergo the full course at the School of Arts, Madras. If Ravi Varma planted the figures of Goddesses Lakshmi and Saraswati in the minds of millions of Indians in the farthest corners of the globe, Rajam achieved a like success in the micro field of Carnatic music with his inimitable drawings of the Carnatic Trinity. If Musiri Subramania Ayyar, Madurai Mani Ayyar, T.N. Rajarathinam, S.G. Kittappa and K.B. Sundarambal had patented their memorable styles of rendition, Rajam has patented his portraits of the Trinity. On the integrity of his drawings, he says:

'I got a photo of the picture of Tyagaraja available with the Tanjore Palace in 1940, took a copy of the picture of Dikshitar from Veena Sundaram Ayyar of the line of disciples of Dikshitar and a copy of the picture of Sastri from his descendants. I took into account their individual characteristics and life-styles as reflected in their kritis and clarified to me by U.Rama Rao, T.V. Subba Rao, K. Chandrasekharan and T.L. Venkatarama Ayyar. I made some changes to answer to the genuine expectations of music-lovers and knowledgeable experts consistent with the genius of the great composers and provided them with a tambur or a veena. The drawings have stood the test of time.' Rajam is virtually Brahma II indeed! *Vide page 220 'A Garland' for other details.*

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## NACHIARKOIL N.K. RAJAM PILLAI - NAGASWARAM ARTISTE:

(b. July 15, 1927)

Born at	:	Nachiarkoil near Kumbakonam
of	:	Kanniah Pillai and Chellammal.
Training	:	under his father along with his brother Duraikannu.
Post held	:	Nagaswara Master at the Rajah's College of Music, Tiruvaiyaru.

He has appeared in the film 'Raja Bhakti' playing nagaswaram and has given discs. Shaik Chinna Moulana is his disciple.

Titles & Honours:	:	Narada Gana Isaimani Kalaimamani from the Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram in 1979.
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Concert tour	:	Sri Lanka
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Note: Month and year of birth are given as March 1917 in 'Who's Who'.

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**D.S. RAJAPPA - MRIDANGIST:**

**(b. April 29, 1924)**

Place of birth : Sudiur near Paramakudi.  
Parents : Dorairaj & Lilli Ranjithammal.

Claims heredity from the historic chieftains Peria Marudu and Chinna Marudu of Sivagangai Seemai. Has been taking part in dramatic troupes like Chitra Thevar's Boys' Dramatic Company. As his voice failed, he took to training in mridangam under the famous Kalaimamani C.S. Sankarasivam. After seven years' apprenticeship, he has been providing accompaniment at concerts and dramas. Is Asthana vidwan with Tirunelveli Madalaya. Was Secretary, Tamil Nadu Nataka Sangham.

Titles : Kalaimamani from Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram (1974-75)  
Sukhanadhalayamani from Karnataka Isai Sangh (1984)

D.S. Rajappa has been providing accompaniment and solo too for the All India Radio.

\* \* \*

**S. RAJARAM - PERCUSSIONIST & PEDAGOGUE: (b. January 30, 1925)**

A grandson of the celebrated Mysore Vasudevacharya, Rajaram is Principal of the prestigious College of Fine Arts, Kalakshetra founded by Rukmini Devi Arundale since 1984. Rajaram started his career as Staff Artiste in the All India Radio for mridangam and jalatarangam and went up the ladder to become the Director of Programmes ( Music) and Senior Station Director. Retired in 1983 as Station Director, AIR, Hyderabad.

He learnt music under his grandfather and mridangam under Vidwan Mysore D. Seshappa. He takes special classes on the compositions of his grandfather to students. He had assisted Vasudevacharya in composing music for the Ramayana Dance- Drama choreographed and produced by Rukmini Devi. He has himself composed music for the four dance-dramas produced by Kalakshetra:

Choodamani Pradanam,  
Bakta Jayadeva,  
Maha Pattabhishekam and  
Karna Sabatham.

The family trait of composing naturally has been inherited by him. A hundred ritis in sanskrit and telugu have been got up by him. It is a feature of his life

that he enjoys the good fortune of being born in an environment of music and live a life of elegance amidst sweet melody first with the All India Radio and now at the Kalakshetra! No wonder he is a soft-spoken gentleman - artiste.

\* \* \*

## **TIRUVARUR RAJAYEE - PRODIGY VOCALIST:**

**(c.1900 - 1925)**

Many a flower is born to blush unseen, said Poet Gray. But he forgot the flowers which blush tantalizingly but vanish the next morn as the veil of the night is lifted. A tragedy - a Shakespearian tragedy it is. She was danseuse, jalatarangam player and vocalist. She was just eight years old and her dance was so enthralling and bewitching that the Rajah of Ramnad did kanakabhishekam to that prodigy! (Kanakabhishekam - symbolic shower of golden leaves is a rare event reserved for the most deserving alone.) In her ninth year, she left off dance and concentrated on music and like the delightful tropical sun, she was at the top and it was all glorious sunlight and no twilight. Stalwarts Simizhi Sundaram Ayyar and Subbier were her gurus and she had advanced training under Mudicondan Venkatarama Ayyar. The latter had such solicitude and appreciation for his ward's musical acumen and expositive wisdom that he himself provided kanjira support at one of her concerts in those days of male chauvinism! Her image, popularity and music were so spectacular and the demand for her concerts was so heavy, that normally there would be her vocal concert on the first day and her jalatarangam concert on the succeeding day usually. She was of a dignified type of musician and sang in four kalais in brika-laden and soul-charged voice. Her mesmerising artistic life lasted just a decade and a half and she died when she was at the apogee of her glory; and when she died, M.S. Subbulakshmi was just nine years and there was none to ascend the 'gadi' rendered vacant. The voice that could elevate the audience to climactic raptures came to be silenced so abruptly.

T. Sankaran confirms the popularity and the gargantuan image of Rajayee thus:

" The tiny Tiruvarur Rajayee scored everything because of her sweet tone (kokilagana?). She was a soft-voiced crony. But in popularity, we may call her the 'M.S.' of her times. At the age of eight or nine, she was the recipient of Kanakabhishekam! Later N.C. Vasantakokilam shot into fame with her dulcet voice and cinema background. "

Venkatarama Ayyar and Dhanyan have all spoken of her in superlative terms. It is unfortunate that the jewel and gem was lost while so tender. Art! How immense is thy composure to bear such tragedies and how verdant virility is thine that you bring forth successive crops of genius.

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**LALGUDI RAMA AYYAR - VIOLINIST;****(1807-1867)**

The fertility of the soil, the interminable expanse of evergreen fields and gardens forming as it were a green carpet of immense dimensions, the divine calm that pervades and the location of the village close to the mother of a rich civilisation, River Cauvery enabled the innate genius of the people to pursue spiritual and artistic ways of life. Far from the madding crowds, their sober wishes never strayed. J.R.D.Tata once said,

**'When I went into business in 1925, there was no corruption for the simple reason that there was nobody to corrupt and there was nobody to ask.'**

Even so, the village of Sri Tapastirthapura, also called Bhairavi Vana, shed its radiant rays of culture and revelled in noble pursuits and artistic advents. **Lalgudi**, its present name, was probably derived from the red tower of the temple. In tune with its puranic heritage, the deity in the temple is called Saptarishiswara.

Lalgudi Rama Ayyar, son of Srinivasa Ayyar exhibited musical potential and **was sent** for a ten-year gurukulavasa in the *Swayambu* – that which came on **its own** – University of the most popular of the Trinity, Tyagaraja at Tiruvaiyaru. On completion, he was doing bhajans at Lalgudi since the fundamental goal of music then was devotional. When Tyagarajah was at Srirangam, Rama Ayyar invited him to his place, a Siva kshetra. The sage-composer, as he did in respect of another disciple, Tiruvottiur Veena Kuppa Ayyar, responded and was with Rama Ayyar at Lalgudi for some days. Inspired by the darshan of the Lord and enthralled by the beauty of the temple and the serene environment, Tyagaraja gave vent to his feelings in five songs now called the '*Lalgudi Pancharatnam*'. Later Rama Ayyar went to Mysore on the invitation of Mummadi Krishna Raja Wodeyar, the celebrated patron of arts and artistes. He became Asthana Vidwan and earned the honorific '*Pallavi Rama Ayyar*'. Valadi Radhakrishna Ayyar and Guruswami Ayyar, his sons were musicians.

The good musician's first son Guruswami Ayyar was a good vocalist and **ghatam** artiste, the second son was Radhakrishnayyar and the third, **Rangaswami** was a pupil of Audanur Subbayya of Srirangam, a vocalist, violinist **and** swarabat player besides being a composer of varnams and kritis, according to T.C.A. Chinna Singaracharyulu.

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**CHIKKA RAMA RAO - VOCALIST:****(1892 - 1946)**

Place of birth	:	Kurudi (Shimoga)
Name of father	:	Subba Rao, a Police Official.
Musical training under	:	Sangeetha Vidya Kanteerava Karigiri Rao and Bakshi Subbanna.

Karigiri Rao had many students bearing the same name of Rama Rao and so he called this disciple 'Chikka' and it stuck to his name to the last. Rama Rao enjoyed a sweet voice and was an asset to his guru, Bakshi Subbanna, who told Veena Seshanna –

'Seshanna you may think that you are great because of your nimble fingers dancing on the frets of the veena. Please note that I am a grade higher than you as I have the sweet voice of Chikka in addition.'

Ettayapuram Ramachandra Bhagavatar too should have thought so when Pushpavanam joined as a pupil. Even as a boy, Rama Rao had a heavy repertoire of devarnamas. The sweet voice evoked sympathetic response from the Dawager Maharani who got him appointed as a Court Vidwan and he was later placed in the Palace Orchestra. Got tuitions in Western music and jalatarangam. Eminent artistes like Poochi Srinivasa Ayyangar and Pudukottai Dakshinamoorti Pillai had high praise for his music. Patnam Subramania Ayyar too had taught him kritis. Apart from his matchless voice, Rao was a laya expert too.

Disciples	:	A. Subba Rao, Arakere Narayana Rao, B.V.K. Sastri.
Compositions	:	swarajatis, varnams and kritis.
Titles & Honours	:	Sangita Ratna - Maharajah of Mysore in 1938. Gayanacharya - Sri Rama Bhajan Sabha, Malleswaram.

His keen insight as a teacher is reflected in the following anecdote:

A. Subba Rao was practising the *Saramati* piece *Mokshamu Galada*. He was elaborating the phrase *Vina Vadhana Loludow*. Rama Rao remarked 'Bhale' twice and the pupil enquired whether his rendition was defective. Said Rama Rao, 'You have failed to produce the Veena Vadhana quality in your voice. Devote time to voice culture'. Such was his implicit faith not only in the quality of the rendition but his insistence to bring out the ethos of the text.

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## MYLATTUR S. RAMACHANDRAN - MRIDANGIST:

(b.1925)

Mridangam was no stranger to his family. Grandfather Krishna Ayyar and father Sami Ayyar - both of Mylattu - were mridanga vidwans. At the age of nine, Mylattu Ramachandran, who had his training under his father, had played for Palladam Sanjeeva Rao, the renowned flautist at the Tyagaraja Aradhana, Tiruvaiyaru. In 1940, he accompanied Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar on the All India Radio in his first programme on the air. For over five decades he has been giving accompaniment to most of the prominent musicians. Ramachandran has a special word of gratitude for Chembai and Chowdiah for the interest taken by them in his case. He had accompanied Chowdiah for many of his disc

recordings. Has participated in National Programmes and Sangeeth Sammelans many times.

He served as Staff Artiste in All India Radio during 1965-1985 at Pondicherry and for sometime earlier at Delhi too.

Title : 'Mridanga Medai' by Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavata.

Publication : 'Mridanga Pada Murai'.

Mylattur is near Palghat. Ramachandran's father-guru Sami Ayyar was teacher in mridangam in the Annamalai University and was a 'Kalaimamani' title-holder. S. Ramachandran regrets that the title is yet to be given to him. Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram may consider.

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### **CHINTLAPALLI RAMACHANDRA RAO - VOCALIST: (b. 1916)**

Ramachandra Rao's father, Sangita Ratna Venkata Rao (1875-1969) was a famous musician. Ramachandra Rao was born at Honasannahalli in Gowribidanur taluk of Kolar district. He had his training in music under his uncle Vidwan Venkatachala Ayya, Bhaskara Rao and Venkata Dasappa. He underwent a course in music at the Annamalai University. He enhanced his musical talents by having special training with Karur Ramaswamy, Pakka Hanumantachar, Pallavi Seshayya and Hangel Chidambara Ayyar. Rao has been giving concerts from his boyhood. Dr. Sampathkumaracharya hails him as a Maha Vidwan, popular and famous and says that people would sit enchanted at his concerts. Has been honoured by Mysore and other Courts. Enjoyed a pleasing 'uttama' sareeram (voice); an expert in rendition of pallavi. Noted for clarity of rendition.

Title and Honours : Sangita Ratna by Mysore Palace  
Mysore State Sangita Academy Award

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### **B. RAMADASAPPA - NAGASWARA ARTISTE: (20th Cent.)**

Son and disciple of Chikka Munuswamiappa, a nagaswara vidwan, Ramadasappa made his debut at the age of ten accompanying his father and soon rose in stature to the top. The Academy of Music, Bangalore, while conferring the State Level Chowdiah Memorial Award on him stated:

'His fidelity in the rendition of popular compositions in the Carnatic genre has won him admirers... a competent concert artiste. He has figured in the programmes of every sabha in the State...his nagaswara heralds the inauguration of many a music festival.'

Honours & Titles: Gana Kalanidhi and Asthana Vidwan, by  
H.H.Sankaracharya, Sringeri Mutt.

Nagaswara Mani from H.H. the Sankaracharya  
of the Kanchi Mutt

Rajyotsava Award, 1990.

Chowdiah Memorial (State Level) Award 1992.

For his nagaswara concerts, he has been using violin and mridangam for accompaniment presumably drawing inspiration from T.N.Rajarathinam.

\* \* \*

### **TANJORE RAMADOSS RAO - MRIDANGAM ARTISTE: (b. April 2, 1889 -)**

Son of Subba Rao and Lakshmi Bai, Ramadoss Rao learnt mridangam under Tanjore Balu Rao. Initially he was playing for musical discourses and later for all artistes. Was Professor of Mridangam, College of Music, Annamalai University. The Music Academy, Madras honoured him with a Certificate of Merit in 1959. Rao enjoyed a wide practice in concerts.

Once Kanchipuram Naina Pillai with Konnakol Mannargudi Pakkiri Pillai attended a festival at Mannargudi where Tirupazhanam Panchapakesa Sastri was giving a musical discourse. Naina Pillai was delighted to hear the mridangam play of Ramadoss Rao and wanted to engage Rao for his concerts. Rao felt diffident and unnoticed left for Tanjore. One year later, Naina Pillai and Pudukottai Dakshinamurti Pillai went over to Tanjore and pressed him to play for Naina Pillai's concerts, which he reluctantly accepted. Dakshinamurti Pillai later described that combination thus :

' Taunting swaras from the masculine voice of Naina to the sweet accompaniment of Rao's mridangam which always sprinkles rose water!'

Rao got into the regiment, the full bench, the magistrate's court as Pillai's concerts were variously called. B.M. Sundaram states that for sixty-three Pillai's concerts, Ramadoss Rao had provided mridangam accompaniment. A 'Kapil Dev' achievement indeed for those distant times when opportunity was scarce. (Number 63, incidentally, represents the strength of Saivite Apostles (Nayanmars).

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### **Dr. T.S. RAMAKRISHNAN - VAINIKA/MUSICOLOGIST: (b.August 1902)**

The *Journals of the Music Academy* bear extensive proof of the vast erudition, meaningful research and sustained pursuit and efforts in the cause of Classical music of Dr. T.S. Ramakrishnan, son of Srinivasamurti. He had his training in vocal and veena under his father. His remote ancestors are stated to have lived in Mysore and Poona and secured the surname of 'Sarasval'. Has served in Sri Lanka and in the Corporation of Madras till 1975.

From some of the papers read by him at the Academy, it is seen that the eminent Mazhavarayanendal Subbarama Bhagavatar had kept a notebook containing a record of 72 melas and 1758 janya ragas with the arohana and the avarohana of each, besides 30 varnas (19 of them rare) and 16 tamil padas of Mazhavai Chidambara Bharati and that '*Sangita Kaumudi*' of Tiruvaiyaru Subramania Ayyar too contains a similar list of janya ragas. T.S. Ramakrishnan has pointed out that Nathamuni Pandithar's '*Sangita Swara Prastara Sagaram*' contains 2014 janya ragas and pleaded for an inventory of all the janya ragas giving the melas, etc. Some janya ragas come under more than one mela raga. There are already a few such digests as desired by him. *Vide* Part III. The proposal is worth attention.

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**GAYAKA SARVABHOUMA PARUPALLI RAMAKRISHNAYYA PANTULU -**  
**VOCALIST MAESTRO: (December 15, 1883 - )**

'A brilliant singer, a creative artiste of high degree and a person with an extensive and varied repertoire. A lakshana lakshya vidwan. Unassuming, good natured, he has set a noble example of an ideal musician.'

— Prof. P. Sambamurty (1949).

Manambuchavadi Venkatasubba Ayyar, a cousin and disciple of Tyagaraja trained a galaxy of disciples including the 'Five Gems'. Susarla Dakshinamurti Sastri of Pedakallepalli, one of the disciples returned to Andhra Pradesh and Parupalli Ramakrishnayya was his distinguished disciple.

Ramakrishnayya was born at Srikakulam, of Seshachalam Pantulu and Mangamma in a family of erudition with devotional background. In accordance with tradition, Seshachalam renounced the world and assumed the name Pradyumnananda Saraswati. In 1896, Ramakrishnayya was sent to Pedakallepalli to learn accountancy and management of Thana affairs. Music lured his attention and in 1898 he started his musical lessons. He overshadowed his co-pupils who were many. In 1902 he took up the post of village karnam (accountant) of Telugurayanipalem. In 1906, his deputy collector (superior in office and appointing authority), Baktavatsalam Naidu became his disciple in music – to pay his respects as a disciple while learning and extract them back as official boss! After sometime, Ramakrishnayya returned to his guru and blossomed into an expert in veena and violin.

He made constant visits to the cultural centres of the South and by observation and contacts, imbibed the features and styles of stalwarts like Ramanathapuram Srinivasa Ayyangar, Konerirajapuram Vaidyanatha Ayyar, Pushpavanam and Palghat Anantarama Bhagavatar. His contacts with musical discourses Mangudi Chidambara Bhagavatar and Panchapakesa Bhagavatar and instrumentalists like Tirukodikaval Krishna Avvar and Govindaswami Pillai

Attended the All India Music Conference at Baroda in 1916 and came back with flying colours. Made his entry into Madras at Gokhale Hall with Chowdiah, Azhaganambi Pillai and Madras Velayudham Pillai as accompanists in the presence of the elite of Madras on November 27, 1921. Prof. D.V. Krishnaiah says:

' This was the climax of the test of the country to crown this leader of music movement with the highest glory that fell to the lot of any artiste in this forsaken land of carping critics. '

Ramakrishnayya was riding the crest of success since then and the All India Music Conference, Madras in 1927 honoured him. He was in the midst of all high musical activity. He was Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Fourth Gayaka Mahasabha. The Andhra Research University, Vizianagaram gave him the title of 'Bharati Tirthopadhyaya'. The Andhra Saraswat Parishad declared him 'Gayaka Sarvabhoutma' in 1931 thus making him the uncrowned king of the world of classical music.

Pantulu was on the Experts Committee of the Music Academy, Madras and the Tyagabrahma Mahotsava Sabha of Tiruvaiyaru and was Examiner, Andhra University.

Ramakrishnayya enjoyed a grand personality, a bold and melodious voice and his rendition was appealing and captivating. His guru-poojas were music festivals, grand in conception and cultured in execution and the public responded well to his wishes by the construction of a music hall, starting a music school and consecration of a Tyagarajah idol. Andhra had, perhaps, the first taste of a Maha Vidwan in him and basked in the salubrious sunshine of Pantulu's musical eminence.

\* \* \*

**VALLALAR RAMALINGA SWAMIGAL - SAINT COMPOSER :**

**(October 5, 1823 - January 30, 1874)**

An Apostle of Universal Religion of Peace, Truth and Morality (*Samarasa Suddha Satya Sanmarga*), a mystic and siddha purusha, the Angel of Grace, Compassion and Solitude made his last journey from the mundane world in the most unique manner quite in accord with his life and mission. Hiranya obtained various boons to avoid death and ultimately all was in vain. Ramalinga Swamigal, popularly known as 'Vallalar', is the beacon who demonstrated to the world how deathlessness is feasible. His body was consigned neither to the earth nor to flames. His individual soul (Jeevatma) merged and dissolved itself in the Universal Soul, the Paramatma. To set the happening on firm record and free from doubts, two European officers of the Government verified the total absence of any mortal remains in the cottage wherefrom he commenced his



celestial journey! He entered the Eternal Abode of Light and merged in the Light Divine (*Arut Perum Jothi*). The Flame kindled at Vadalur burns perpetually for the salvation of Humanity. (Such a light is said to burn at Shirdi of Sai Baba also. Vallalar's departure is reminiscent of Manickavachakar's at Chidambaram close to Vadalur itself.) The immortality of Vallalar is strictly in conformity with the scriptures.

' Na cha punarāvarthathē  
Na cha punarāvarthathē. '

(He does not return;  
he does not return.)

— *SRUTI*.

" Mām upētya tu Kauntēya  
Punarjanma na vidyatē . "  
(Attaining Me, there is no rebirth.)

— *GITA* VIII-16.

' Gacchanty apunara vrittim  
Jnananirdhūntakalmashāh. '

(Their sins being completely shaken off by  
Wisdom, they go whence there is no return.)

— *GITA* V-17.

Ramalinga Swamigal was no abstract, austere yogi who buried himself in snow-clad mountains or heavily wooded forests. He was an organiser *non pareil*. He established the Samarasa Veda Sanmarga Sangham in 1865. The Abode of Siddhi (Immortality) and the Jyoti are for public good and open to all. The second is the Satya Veda Dharmasala, a free kitchen open to the public to quench their biological hunger with a view to prepare them for spiritual hunger and mission, spiritual enquiry (*Vichara*) and reach the Eternal Abode, even as Upanishad Brahman did at Kanchipuram and declared its avowed purpose in clear terms - *Vide 'A Garland'*. The kitchen was started in 1867. Siddhi Valagam (1870) and Satya Jnana Sabha (1872) are the other two founded by him. The range and objectives of the institutions started by Vallalar reveal his depth of vision and the missionary zeal which marked his organising endeavours.

Born at Marudur near Chidambaram, of Ramayya Pillai and Chinna Ammayar, he went early to Ponneri and then to Muthialpet (Madras) and grew up under the care of his eldest brother, Sabhapathy. He lived at Karunguzhi (1858-1867), Vadalur (1867-1870) and Mettukuppam thereafter. Tirugnana Sambandar was his *Jnana* Guru by adoption and *Tiruvachakam*, his bible. He was a devotee of Lord Muruga. Having realised God Vision at the very tender age of nine, Vallalar was intoxicated with spiritual and moral ideals and goals and imbued with a missionary zeal. A specimen of his unbounded compassion, love and solicitude and the panorama of his vision is here:

' Every time I saw crops withering, I withered too; as often  
As I saw hungry destitute beggars, I too fainted with hunger;

And the defeat of the meritorious  
Has made me wilt in pain.

**My life must cease when my compassion dies.'**

Eight years after the Siddhi of Vallalar, Subramania Bharati was to be born to declare again that the crow and the sparrow belonged to his caste and the sea and the mountain constituted his crowd! Vallalar's crusade (1865 – 1874) for spiritual and moral force was in another sphere carried on during the same period by Gopala Krishna Bharati with his '*Nandanar*' (1861), a revolutionary, epoc-making tamil opera in the cause of removal of untouchability and social degradation. The beauty and grace in the lives of these great men lie in that they followed and practised what they preached and suffered for their ideals.

If the Soul of India shines bright still and commands respect in the Comity of Nations, it is only because such venerable souls had trod this land, had chosen this land for their brief tenancies. What is Bharath without its sages, poets, etc? No wonder Subramania Bharati thundered to emphasise this truth and warn his countrymen -

'You are a son of Bharath;  
Erase that thought not!'

Prof. K.R. Srinivasa Ayyangar beautifully sums up the life of Vallalar thus:

" Ramalinga and Gandhiji are surely among the supreme benefactors of humanity - Vallalars - angels and ministers of grace...Like Ramakrishna Paramahansa in Bengal, like Dayananda Saraswati in Western India, Ramalinga Swami in Tamil Nadu was also a prophet of the dawn of Renascent India...They were the potent power-houses of resurgence..He saw that the mystic vision of '*Arut Perum Jyoti*', was allied to the complementary power of '*Thani Perum Karunai*' (Unique Sovereign Compassion). "

Vallalar's songs are called *Thiru Arutpa* (Golden Book of Grace). They were published first in 1867 itself. The spiritual grace of Vallalar was supported by his organisational and managerial wisdom, efficiency and capability. That is the beauty, the unique flavour of his life and his mission. Arumugha Navalar and others were opposed to his ideals and there was litigation. In the Court, when Adigalar entered, the plaintiff Navalar stood up to show his respect and the Judge remarked how such respect and reverence could go together with the contentions in the suit plaint. The suit failed. Six books with six thousand songs appeared. Sri Ooran Adigal of Vadalur has done yeoman service to publicise the works of Adigalar. (The author had the blessings of Adigalar to participate in one of the annual festival-based conferences at Vadalur and also propose, as District Collector, the issue of a Commemoration stamp by the Government of India.) The entire literary output of Vallalar has been published in three volumes by the Ramalingar Pani Mandram with the munificence of the philanthropic industrialist Dr. N. Mahalingam, who heads it. T.S. Parthasarathy wrote in the '*Hindu*':

' *Arutpa* is a shining monument of Vallalar's religious devotion, spiritual insight and poetical skill, uttered out of pure imagination, yet fully satisfying the rules of prosody. Realising that poetry set to music had a greater appeal, the Swami himself wrote musical compositions like kirtanas, chindus and kummis in popular ragas. During the early decades of this century, eminent singers like Tiruchendur Shanmughavadivu recorded verses from *Thiru Arutpa* on gramophone discs. Later renowned stage actors like S.G. Kittappa and K.B. Sundarambal sang them in their dramas to great effect. *Tiruvadi Pugazhcchi* was set to music by T.M. Theagarajan and recorded as a cassette by Dr. M. Prameela. '

Vallalar's Publications :	Ozhivilodukkam	1851
	Thondamandala Sadakam	1855
	Chinmaya Dipikai	1857
Vallalar's Journal :	Sanmarga Viveka Vruddi.	
Works authored :	Manumuraikanda Vachakam	
	Jeeva Karunya Ozhukkam	
	Thiru Arutpa	

### Prime tenets preached by Vallalar :

God is one.

Animal Sacrifice is not in conformity with religion.

Meat-eating should be avoided.

Race and Caste distinctions should not exist.

Religious rites are not necessary.

Poor should be helped; Compassion is of prime relevance.

Ramalinga Swamigal was a preacher, thinker, poet, composer, author, editor, publisher, journalist, jnani, doctor, social reformer, organiser and saint all in one. Worshipped as a Saint, he lived for the religious, spiritual, social and moral resurgence of the people. A great yogi of immense humanism and vision, he has left a deep impression in the conduct and character of the people of Tamil Nadu who follow his tenets. All efforts should be made to take the message and songs of Swamigal to the youth of the country.

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### R.A. RAMAMANI - VOCALIST:

(20th Cent.)

It is to the credit of Ramamani that classical Carnatic music had been introduced to the beat of jazz percussion and jazz band. (Many may have no idea of its effect and impact -adverse or otherwise and proximate and ultimate - on classicism.) She had her musical training under S. Ramachandra Rao, Seshagiri Achar and Anoor Ramakrishnan and had taken her Master's Degree in Classical music from the Bangalore University. She performs Avadhana Pallavi - maintaining two tala measures simultaneously. Is Lecturer, Karnatic College of Percussion, Bangalore and has participated in international festivals in Europe, Canada, etc.

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**G. RAMAMURTI BHAGAVATAR - MUSICAL DISCOURSER:****(b. Decr. 4, 1933)**

Born at Tanjore, of S.K. Gopala Bhagavatar and Alarmelmangai, Ramamurti Bhagavathar belongs to the Krishna Bhagavatar line of musical discourse artistes. Had his training under the distinguished Harikatha Praveena Annaswami Bhagavatar. Has been training many through an institution called 'Araneri Siruvar Kuzhu'.

Titles &amp; Honours :

Harikatha Bhushanam  
Harikatha Siromani  
Harikatha Kalabhushan  
Kalaimamani from Tamil Nadu  
Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram in 1980.

\* \* \*

**HULLAHALLI RAMANNA - VOCALIST & VIOLINIST:****(1854 - 1918)**

In 1876, Ramanna became a teacher in a primary school. He was proficient and competent on violin. He was blessed with a good voice too. Besides his mastery in music, he was a good literateur in sanskrit and kannada. He was a violinist and a musical discourser and had been applauded by Maharajah Chamaraja Wodeyar who was a *connoisseur non pareil*. Ramanna had composed devaranamas and songs in hundreds in rare and popular ragas under the signature 'Trinapureesa', etc. Was a good painter also.

Among his disciples were his son Venkataramiah, musical discourser, Venkatasubba Panditha, violinist and Kumara Avadhya, vocalist. One of his javalis is set in marching tune inviting the lover (Nayaka) to come near. B.V.K. Sastri and Chennakesaviah pay tributes to Ramanna's musical expertise. Hullahalli is near Nanjangud in Karnataka.

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**M.S. RAMAYYA - PERCUSSIONIST:****(b. May 1922)**

Ramayya came out of a garden of artistes, father Subbanna and grandfather Anantappa being tabla players and brothers M.S. Subramaniam and Chinnaswamy being violinists. He underwent training –

in tabla	:	under his father
in mridangam	:	under Muthuswami Devar and Ventatesha Devar,
besides advanced training	:	under Puttachar and Srinivasalu Naidu ;
in tabla for hindustani music	:	under Jan Saheb and
in vocal music	:	under B. Devendrappah.

His multi-sided training both in vocal and in percussion enabled him to play

a prominent part in Karnataka and few prominent musicians are there for whom he has not provided accompaniment. 'His vocal training combined with his orientation in laya made him a complete and competent laya exponent with soft and deft strokes.'

Was Staff Artiste, All India Radio.

### Honours and titles:

Karnataka Kala Tilaka  
Mridanga Kala Shiromani  
Sangita Kala Ratna by Gayana Samaja, Bangalore (1991)

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### M. RAMASUBRAMANIA SARMA - MUSICAL DISCOURSER:

(b. July 19, 1926)

Son of Muthu Bhagavatar and Balambal and born at Tanjore, he had his training under his father. Had given extensive musical discourses in India and abroad and his discourse on the 'Four Prime Tamil Saints' is in discs also.

Titles & Honours: Navarasa Vak Amirdha Bhushanam  
Kalaimamani from Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka  
Mandram in 1979.

Concert tours: Sri Lanka and South Africa.

\* \* \*

### COIMBATORE N. RAMASWAMI - MRIDANGIST:

(b. 1920)

Parents : Natesa Pillai and Mangammal.

Born in a musical family, he had his training in tavil under the maestro Needamangalam Meenakshisundaram Pillai and took to mridangam later adopting the style of Palani Subramania Pillai. Has given accompaniment to prominent musicians and has been honoured with the titles 'Thannumai Pulavar' and 'Kalaimamani' by the Tondaimandalam Adheenam and the Tamil Nadu Sangeetha Nataka Sangham respectively.

\* \* \*

### K.G. RAMASWAMY - VOCALIST :

(b. August 7, 1948)

Place of birth : Shimoga in Karnataka

Parents : Kuskoor Gurumurti Sastri and Nagamma

Ramaswamy's grandfather Kuskoor Krishna Avadhani was devoted to bhajans and father Gurumurti Sastri had musical training with Vidwan Rama Jois of Shimoga. Ramaswamy had his preliminaries in music with his father and higher studies with Vidwan V. Srinivasan of Kerala. Made his debut in 1964 at Shimoga. Passed the Proficiency Examination in 1975. He has been giving concerts on the Doordarshan, All India Radio and outside and is the only 'A'

grade vocalist of the All India Radio, Bhadravati.

K.G. Ramaswamy, a B.Com, is an Internal Auditor in Viswesvarayya Iron and Steel Ltd., Bhadravati. He was awarded the 'Best Musician' distinction by the Bangalore Gayana Samaja, Bangalore in 1985.

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## **RANGANAYAKI AYYANGAR - VOCALIST & PEDAGOGUE:**

(b. Decr.28, 1927)

Place of birth : Tirunelveli district (though she hails from Madurai district)  
Name of father : Post-master Ayyangar - the popular name having stuck to him.

Ranganayaki Ayyangar had the precious blessings of gurukula with Namakkal Sesha Ayyanger during 1947-1955 and with Mudicondan Venkatarama Ayyar till 1960. Securing a solid foundation in music under the two stalwarts over a period of fourteen years, she was giving concerts during 1947-1967 subsequently in different spells over All India Radio and outside, besides overseas concerts in USA, Holland and Japan. Research and teaching later claimed her attention so fully that she could find little scope for concerts. Musicology is her forte, teaching is her second field of specialisation, her rich training and a two-decade long performing career enabling her to make her grade. Her academic background has equally been solid :

1965:	University of Hawaii Honolulu	-	M.A. (Ethnomusicology)
1972:	University of Pennsylvania	-	M.A. (Musicology)
1980:	University of Pennsylvania	-	Ph.D. (Musicology)

To pursue her chosen fields of expertise and specialisation, she had the benefit of —

1957-60:	Government Scholarship in Carnatic music.
1962-64:	East-West Grant for Cultural Exchange, University of Hawaii.
1967-68:	Fellowship, University of Pennsylvania.
1968-70:	Teaching Fellowship with same University.
1970-71:	Penfield Research Scholarship & Travel Grant of the same University.
1971-72:	Dissertation Year Fellowship - Same University.

Ranganayaki Ayyangar has been participating in Conferences, Seminars and Colloquia presenting lecdems, etc., on such diverse subjects and for as —

Somanatha's Rudra Vina	- Music Academy, Madras.
Musicology & its implications	- Benares University.
Music in Higher Education	- M.S. University of Baroda.
Performing Arts of India	- SIBMAS, Barcelona.
Standardization of Technical Terminology in Hindustani Music	- Benares University.
Ornamentations	- Wesleyan University.
Alwars and Music	- M.S. University, Baroda.

History of Oral Tradition in  
Carnatic music  
Music & Multimedia - Case  
Studies

- ICTM Colloquium.

- UNESCO Workshop, New Delhi.

### Posts held:

Lecturer / Teaching Fellow /  
Visiting Professor:



College of Fine Arts, Mysore/  
Pennsylvania University /  
University of Illinois / Swarthmore and  
Dartmouth Colleges.

Reader / Head of Department  
of Musicology and Professor - }

Benares Hindu University.

Presently, Ranganayaki Ayyangar is Director of the research-oriented institution 'Sampradaya' and is a Member, Standing Committee, Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts, New Delhi.

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### R. RANGARAMANUJA AYYANGAR - VAINIKA & MUSICOLOGIST:

(February 2, 1901 - May 20, 1980)

Place of birth	:	Serangulam, Mannargudi, Tanjore district.
Parents	:	Raghunathaswami Ayyangar and Janaki Ammal
Graduated from	:	Findlay College, Mannargudi ( in Arts and Teaching).

Rangaramanuja Ayyangar was a multi-faceted genius, teacher, vainika, vocalist, author, promoter of music and researcher. He could play on violin, kanjira and jalatarang. A pioneer evangelist dedicated to the resuscitation of values in art, more particularly in Carnatic music to which he was passionately devoted from beginning to his end, Ayyangar's multi-sided activities included propagation, publicity and giving lectures in and outside India on a vast scale. He was a sincere admirer of Veena Dhanammal and when she stood deserted in her old age by kith and kin, he was steadfast in his attachment to her and her art. He was one of the key figures in running the Jagannatha Baktha Sabha, Madras which presented classical concerts in the thirties to the *cognoscenti*. A firm believer in Sampradaya (Traditional) music, he had close contacts with the stalwarts of raga and laya. He was one of the few who was intimately knowledgeable about percussionists of the day - which actually saw the finest ensemble of mridangists, tavilkars, kanjira, ghatam and konnakol artistes in a measure not witnessed earlier or later. A musicologist *par excellence*, Ayyangar had authored many books and was the first -

to publish the largest number of the songs of Purandara Dasa,

to publish an elaborate scheme of clear scientific notation to express gamakas and subtle nuances;

to carry classical rendition on veena to the Far East, Sri Lanka and the United States

and

to publish a very large number of songs well edited.

### Publications:

His varied publications reveal his vast learning and keen dedication to the fine art and the books are in addition to his numerous learned lectures and instructive demonstrations in universities and elsewhere.

Keertanamalai	1934
Kritimanimalai covering an impressive number of 1470 compositions of the Trinity besides padams, javalis, etc.	1947 / 1967
An encyclopaedic anthology of songs garnered from various sources.	
Gita Govindam	1959
Pallavi Tradition (contains 25 pallavis)	
History of South Indian (Carnatic) Music	1972
(Contains valuable information on the systems, its stalwart votaries, etc.)	
Sangita Ratnakara of Sarngadeva.	
Musings of a Musician	1977.

One may gauge his intense passion for the music of the golden age - the period of the closing years of the 19th and the early decades of the 20th century from his various observations such as --

"...the handful of talented musicians who crossed into the 20th century were confronted by a new situation... The advent of careerism and commercial-mindedness threw the old generation of musicians into confusion and disarray. Traditional training involving years of hard work and rigorous discipline became superfluous. The old veterans dropped one by one unable to do anything to transmit their knowledge and experience. Thus the links with an expansive glorious past snapped... With swelling numbers and competition, disinterested pursuit of art has been scotched by the struggle for survival."

He had taught for thirty-seven years at the M.Ct. Muthiah Chettiar High School, Purasawakkam, Madras till 1959 and had a brief spell as proof-reader in the 'Hindu' Madras. Music had a magic lure for him from the beginning; Rajagopala Dikshitar's lay (lakshya) music, Mannargudi Chinna Pakkiri's nagaswara play and Simizhi Sundaram Ayyar's virgin classicism inspired him. Dhanammal during 1926-38 was an all-absorbing enlightening force which shaped him into a crusader for classicism, pure and noble. He was simple and broad-minded and was a nationalist. His teaching methods were unique in approach and effect.

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### SAKKOTTAI RANGU AYYANGAR - MRIDANGAM ARTISTE:

(b. March 21, 1893 -)

Son of Krishna Ayyangar, Rangu Ayyangar was born in a family of sanskrit and music experts and at the age of thirteen started his training under Jagannatha Bhagavatar of Kumbakonam and Rangaswami Ayyangar of Puducheri. He had accompanied top artistes and was popular for his smooth



play on mridangam. The Music Academy, Madras awarded a Certificate of Merit to him in 1958.

\* \* \*

**RAVI KIRAN - GOTTUVADYAM (CHITRA VEENA) PRODIGY:**

**(b. February 12, 1967)**

Classical Carnatic music was the staple of the family. Grandfather Narayana Ayyangar of Mysore was a renowned gottuvadyam player. Father Narasimhan is an artiste too. No wonder the combined, cumulative musical expertise and wisdom have expressed themselves in Ravi Kiran, acclaimed as a rebirth of his grandfather. Music has gone very deep into Ravi Kiran right from childhood. His raga alapana, kriti rendition and swara essays are deep, expositive and soulful. There is a steady and confident flow of classical melody at his concerts born of sure approach, certain grasp, planned thoughts and robust innovative application. The unruffled stately manner in which he proceeds is a tribute to his mastery and mature musicianship. One could see him conversing with his chitra veena even as Madurai Mani would do with the tambura and Balachander with his veena. One could notice a contemplative philosophic look in his face when he performs indicating mature and total dedication to the finer nuances and graces of music. His rendition is along the 'Raja marga' of meditative classicism and never treads the bylanes of neoclassicism. His raga essays are thoughtful and elaborate and kriti rendition and swara explorations crisp.

His advent and graduation in the musical world is as old as his second year. He took the world by storm by exhibiting his precocious phenomenon with his ability to identify and demonstrate more than 325 ragas and 175 talas besides standing up to a quiz session on the theory of Carnatic music. Here is an authentic account from the *Journal of the Music Academy* (XLI) :

### **"Child Music Prodigy"**

'Ravikiran, 2½ years old, appeared before the members of the Experts' Committee of the Music Academy. A very large gathering of people had thronged to witness... The child could recognise 72 melakartas, their 12 chakras, anaka and janya ragas, different kinds of ragas - sampurna, shadava, etc., orakriti and vikriti swaras, the ten kinds of gamakas, talas and their jatis . . . different parts of composition...'

He was put to a test also and the child came out with flying honours. What was the result?

'The Music Academy proposed to give a monthly stipend of Rs. Fifty for three years for the proper upbringing of the child... The child would attend the coming conferences of the Academy...'

So, the child sat with other Experts aged fifty, sixty and seventy!! And sat

uly accredited!!! It is a historic event in the annals of Carnatic music and the accreditation had been done by the highest reputed body competent to do it. It could appear that the grace of Saint Gnanasambandar had descended on the child! The Press found itself landed in a drought of expletives and adjectives. Praise poured in from all directions. Here are some :

" If you don't believe in God, look at Ravi Kiran." — Pandit Ravishankar ( 1969 - 70)

" With mikes all around him and his hands full of biscuits . . . all the time playing , the child gave out correct answers.' — *The Journal of the Music Academy* 1969 - 70

" His recital, *sans* violin, *sans* percussion, stood aloft like a beacon for the storm - battered music world." — *Indian Express*.

" To listen to his music is an education in Carnatic Classicism." — *The Hindu*.

Pandit Ravishankar's remark of 1969-70 was the echo of what was said at Berlin on April 12, 1929 by the great mathematical physicist famous for the theory of Relativity. Yehudi Menuhin was thirteen. At the concert, his violin - lay was remarkable. 'The sounds were as pure as gold, inspired by an angelic naturalness of phrasing and musicality and without a trace of childishness.' When Albert Einstein remarked :

**"Now I know that there is a God in Heaven."**

The only difference was that Menuhin was then about 13 while Ravi Kiran was younger by ten years.

The progress thenceforth was equally impressive. He gave his first vocal concert at Bangalore while yet a boy of five. Next year, he gave his first performance on gottuvadyam at the Brahma Gana Sabha. Pleased at the artistry, maturity and technical elegance displayed by Kiran, Semmangudi Dr. Vinayakram presented the plectrum used once by his guru, Saktharama Rao, who, incidentally, was preceptor to Kiran's grandfather too. In 1980 the Music Academy selected him as the best Junior and in 1981, it awarded him the Hanmughavadivu Memorial Prize. His concert career could be taken as regularly commenced from the age of twelve, when the All India Radio accepted him as an artiste and placed him in the very next year itself in 'A' Grade. He was on television in 1980. His dedication and application to art were so intense that he could think of scholastic education only at the age of nine by which time, he was a recognised artiste in the music world. He switched over to gottuvadyam when his vocal expression was fairly advanced.

Ravi Kiran is one of the top, senior artistes now and perhaps the best authority to handle chitraveena. He has not the inclination to stoop to play to gallery or deviate from the golden mean of pure classicism. His rendition enjoys the majesty which one sees in Muthuswami Dikshitar's kritis. In his approach to his music, he is in the distinguished company of the late Veena Balachander, who had once said :

"The rasika's love for music has no commercial angle, whereas, we (musicians) are being paid to perform for them!! To us, it is certainly a commercial proposition, a commercial commitment!!! Hence, from where we sit, they are purer at heart!!! . . . As a musician, your responsibility is to see that, although it is a commercial arrangement, YOU DO NOT MAKE YOUR ART COMMERCIAL!!! "

It is noteworthy that young Ravi Kiran is a staunch believer of this dictum and has never swerved from it. His ideal is fully projected in his statement

" I seek to expand the horizon of their knowledge and deepen their understanding by giving explanation and lecdern. "

How many artistes could lay claim to this? A Commerce Graduate and sports enthusiast, Ravi Kiran has founded the International Foundation for Carnatic Music to cater to the needs of students, etc., in furtherance of this objective.

Gottuvadyam is a rare musical instrument and only a few have been able to master it and attain renown and fame; and so it is meritorious that Ravi Kiran distinguished himself while so young as the most authentic exponent on that instrument.

' The faultless vision of classicism, his pure and intense gaze of gnanam... phrasing the ragas with pregnant silences between statements created each raga beautifully and evoked its powerful tranquility, demonstrating authentic alapana tradition. '

— (The Hindu)

'NMN'called him a 'Saṅgeetha Gnani.' The 'Gnani' is a picture of decorum, dignity and poise on the dais - exuding self-reverence, self-knowledge and self-control. In July 1985, Ravi Kiran demonstrated his determination, skill and expertise with a non-stop twenty-four hour play on Chitraveena and the unique feature of this exercise was that it was done *sans* food, water and even movement from his seat. It was a feat of endurance, total surrender to music, yogic musical expression and nadha yoga.

### **Titles and Honours :**

1973	Arul Isai Selvam	—	By Tamil Nadu Nalvazhi Nilayam
1980	Nada Sudharnava	---	By Murali Ravali
1985	Sangeetha Samrat	—	By Wisdom International
1985	Kalaimamani	—	By Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram
1986	Madura Nada Mannar	—	By Arul Neri Mandram
1991	Sanskriti Award	—	By Sanskriti Pratishthan of India.

### **Concert Tours :**

Festival of India in France	1985
Rang - Raag Fest, U.K.	1986
International Musical Festival of Radio France	1987
Festival of India in Switzerland	1987
Raag - Mala Festival, USA	1988
Festival of India, Germany	1991 - 1992
Concerts in France, Germany, Holland, U.K., USA, Canada etc.,	

The photo taken on the occasion of Ravi Kiran's advent at the Music Academy at the age of two graces this '*Garland*'. Admirers may be glad to be reminded of a like reaction in the life of another great man in a different walk of life. Samuel Johnson was not quite three years old; he was at the Cathedral perched upon his father's shoulders listening and gaping at the much celebrated preacher, Dr. S. When asked how such an infant could possibly be thought of being brought to a crowded church, father Michael Johnson answered :

'It is impossible to keep him at home; for young as he is, he has caught the public spirit and zeal for Dr. S. and would have stayed for ever in the Church satisfied with beholding him !'

Ravi Kiran is a knowledgeable instrumentalist of such sweetness of tone, temperament and deportment that it is hard to imagine him sounding anything but benignly classical.

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## MISCHIEF

Wit, Wisdom and Mischief are collaterals. It is well known that flautist wizard Sarabha Sastri had a disciple in Sanjeeva Rao. Actually there was another, Ramu of Tiruvisanallur who later flowered as the famous mimicry specialist and Asthana Vidwan Vikatakavi Ramaswami Sastrigal.

Ramu was witty, wise and mischievous. Rama of Ramayana too was so. Did he not antagonise Manthara, the hunchback? Sarabha was about to enter his house after a visit. Ramu, who was tuning the tambura for Sanjeeva's flute practice, stopped tuning it but mimicked deliberately bringing an element of wrong sruti. The maestro was shocked and shouted.,

'Sanjeeva, where is the sruti, you....'

Innocent Sanjeeva did not know what had happened. He was shocked, apologised and pointed to the culprit Ramu. The learned Sarabha could not see the mischievous joy in the face of young Ramu as he was not blessed with eye-sight. Suppose he had it, would he have enjoyed it or shown the gate to Ramu?

The art of musical mimicry has practically lost its popularity after the lifetime of Ramaswami Sastrigal.

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## **PROF. V.V. SADAGOPAN - PEDAGOGUE/VOCALIST : (b. Jan'y 29, 1915)**

Prof. Sadagopan was a distinguished musician—teacher who had contributed much to the science and art of music. He held highly practical and enlightened views and made a subtle distinction between Music in Education and Education in Music and supported the view that *Lakshya* (aesthetic perception) should precede and prevail over *Lakshna* (intellectual abstraction). Here is a beautiful bunch of similies from him :

' Nada is the calm Sea of Quiet Joy  
on which the student voyages.  
The boat is his voice and it should not be leaky.  
Sruti is the rudder; Laya, the paddle.  
Raga Bhava is the sail; and imagination, the wind.'

He had his musical tutelage with Namakkal Sesha Ayyangar and Ramanuja Ayyangar. Was Professor, Delhi University (Faculty of Music). He founded the 'Tyaga Bharati' School. Was on the Experts Committee of the Music Academy, Madras and had contributed much to its deliberations. Viravanallur Vedantam Sadagopan represented Indian Music in the Centenary Celebrations of the Moscow Conservatoire, 1966. He was Founder - Director, Delhi Sangeeta Samaj. Was a regular contributor of articles and was Editor of the journal *Indian Music* published by it. *Spirals and Circles* compiled from notes and lectures of Sadagopan was released by the Music Education Mission. The book presents a master plan for teaching, singing and hearing of music. 'Has an evangelic zeal for "Music for Human Relations through integrative Music Education". He believes individual, social and global harmony can be fostered through this. A musician of high calibre.'

— *Indian Music Journal*.

**Concert Tour : Europe.**

**Disc recordings.**

Sadagopan has composed songs under the signature 'Seshadasan' and has set to tunes many songs of Ambhujam Krishna and others.

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## **MYSORE SADASIVA RAO - EMINENT COMPOSER: (19th Century)**

A disciple of the illustrious Wallajah Venkataramana Bhagavatar, who was a direct disciple of Tyagarajah, Sadasiva Rao is the distinguished musician who trained the famous Veena Subbanna and Veena Seshanna of Mysore. A runaway boy at twelve and a Collector's Office clerk later, he became Asthana

Vidwan at the Mysore Durbar a recognition of his erudite musical scholarship. Of course, he might not have accepted the post but for a quirk of fate! Sadasiva Rao was affluent and was passionately devoted to *Atithi satkara* - feeding as many guests as possible daily at his house. Feeding guests was a custom that was part of Hindu dharma till recently. He never wavered in his great mission even when generosity and charity had reduced his status from a princely life to abject penury. (This may remind one of a tamil king of 'Purananuru' days, who was lavish in his charity. He was overthrown by another ruler and thrown into prison. Charity did not help him to win the war but provided him with an occasion to become immortal in the golden pages of poetry. A poet ignorant of his pathetic lot, went to meet him and at the prison eulogised his noble traits regretting the king's present condition and his own harsh fate. The penniless prisoner gave him a letter addressed to his wife. The forlorn lady, on seeing the letter, felt miserable having nothing to present to the poet as counselled by her spouse. Finally she tied up a turmeric as her *mangalasutra* and presented the only article of value she had viz., the *mangalasutra* (*thali*) itself made of gold to uphold the unsullied dharmic dignity of her spouse! In the life of Adisankaracharya, the lady had nothing left to present to the yogi and presents the only thing left in her house, an emblic myrabolan.) Sadasiva was a faithful follower of the scriptural injunctions on charity. He had perforce to accept the post of Court Vidwan on Rs. Thirty per mensem in the context of his straitened circumstances. He died at the age of eighty full of merit and glory.

Sadasiva Rao was born at Chittoor and went over to Mysore when he was thirty years old. He had an imposing personality, dignified and grand. Was a mahratta and a devotee of Lord Narasimha. Mysore Vasudevachar recounts a very significant incident. Rao was giving a concert for Ramotsavam to a packed hall. Someone requested him to sing his kirtana *Narasimhud (Kamalamanohari)*. Rao explained that he used to sing that song only in his pooja room observing a fast. The admirer persisted with folded hands innocent of his qualms. 'Believing *jana seva* is also a form of *Janardana Seva*, Sadasiva Rao went through pallavi and anupallavi and when he was singing the sahitya *Sanakadulu Vismayimpa*, the framed picture of Narasimha hung up on the wall suddenly fell down, the glass breaking into pieces! The great man was in tears and the audience felt sad and distressed.

He has composed delightful kirtanas full of bhava and bhakti like *Paramadbhutamaina (Khamas)* on Srirangam Ranganatha, Sri *Parthasarathi (Bhairavi)* on the Lord at Triplicane, *Kanugoni (Kalyani)* on Sri Kamakshi Kanchipuram. His disciple Subbanna kept complete account of his *tanavarnas padavarnas*, kirtanas, tillanas and swarajatis. Vasudevacharya describes Rao's style as *Narikalapaka* with a difficult outer structure but with sweet, nourishing inner content and calls him *Gandharvamsha Sambhoota*. He had adopted several signatures including '*Sadasiva Bhagyadheya*'. His songs are full of devotion with scope for resplendent raga bhava.

**SADHURAM SWAMIGAL - INSPIRED COMPOSER: (b. February 3, 1937)**

'Sethuraman sings the praise of Siva as the four great Nayanmars did; he pours out his soul in praise of Vishnu as the twelve great Alwars did; he goes into ecstasies over Muruga as Saint Arunagirinathar did; he sings the glory of Ambikai (Goddess) as Abhirami Bhattar did; and he celebrates in his poems the lives and greatness of contemporary saints as Sekkizhar did in the 12th century A.D. of the famous sixty-three saints. I shall not be surprised if he sings of the Buddha and Christ, Zoraster and Mohammed, Confucius and Tao also.'

— O.V. Alagesan, former Minister, Government of India and  
an ardent admirer of Swamigal.

Sethuraman is now Sadhuram Swamigal after renunciation. He is an *Arutkavi*, a gifted composer of songs and verses. He does not consciously compose; the sahitya, the lyric or the songs roll out cascading as if the Amazon rushes through the 167 feet Niagara Falls! He stands in trance; no conscious effort, no manner of thinking or perceivable mental exercise. Honeyed songs and poems pour out of his lips pregnant with excellence of concept, richness of rhythm and easy-paced rhyme. The author of this book was himself a witness to one such exercise of his about three decades back when Swamigal had not taken to renunciation. It was unbelievable. It was at Uthiramerur famous for its Chola inscriptions on Panchayat Raj and O.V. Alagesan brought him to the temple there. Alagesan records that those who doubted about the divine rendition of the Tamil Big Four Apostles and of Arunagirinathar would get enlightened when they see Swamigal's flowing *extempore* composition and rendition and states that there is no such person of his eminence now in Tamil Nadu. The compositions are in chaste tamil conforming to the rules of grammar and prosody. 'His whole being melts into music everytime he composes.'

S.V. Sethuraman though born at Madras belongs to Nadakudi near Nannilam on the banks of the River Mudicondan near Srivanjiam. Son of S. Venkataswami Ayyar and Dharmambal Ammal, he passed his SSLC and was in service in the Sub Registry Offices at Tiruporur and Madras, Prithvi Insurance Company and Life Insurance Corporation of India, Madras. Was of a religious bent of mind even while young and had strange premonitions and experiences. For instance, on January 20, 1952, a ripe old man approached him at Tiruporur, handed over to him a 108-line kummi song, took him to his Chintadripet (Madras) residence and disappeared! That was the beginning of his spiritual pursuits and he began to spin out delicious songs full of devotional flavour, artistic grace and conceptual beauty. The incident of 20th January was a mystic experience pure and simple which confirmed the path and purpose of his mission. The 108-line piece was *Thiru Murugan Hara Harao Harakkummi*. He had earlier initiation in *Tirupugazh* by Sri Vallimalai Sachitananda Swamigal.

Official life hindered not his spiritual mission but was not in tune with his innate instincts and his efflorescence in the destined path. He took to

renunciation on February 15, 1969 and Sethuraman became Sadhuram Swamigal. His compositions called *Arutpugazh* number twenty-thousand progressively increasing in number and variety. Arul Isai Mani, Tirupugazh Nallisai Selvar, Su.Ve. Subramaniam, his purvashrama brother assists him in recording his outpourings even as Purandara's sons helped their illustrious father.

Swamigal made his debut in 1951 with a musical discourse at Madras and *extempore* rendition commenced in 1953 at Nādakudi. He has been giving musical *discourses* and lectures. Has toured throughout India and has founded many institutions to further his laudable objectives..

His publications are numerous and varied including a prose work *Katturai kadambam*.

Disc recordings : Tirupugazh in two cassettes  
Sri Reddiapatti Swamigal's Arutpadalgal, etc. in eight cassettes.

**Titles:**

Arulkavi,	Aasukavi,
Madhurakavi,	Chitrakavi,
Vistharakavi,	Chathurakavi Rajan.

His fiftieth birthday was celebrated in 1987 with great enthusiasm. The Golden Jubilee Souvenir released on the occasion contains some of his compositions. Presently he is based in the Pongji Madalayam, Nangainallur, Madras. **Musicians may avail of his songs and bring them to current use.**

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**RAJAH SAHAJI II - MUSICOLOGIST & COMPOSER:** **(Ruled during 1684 - 1712)**

'Sahaji Raja, the Abhinavabhoja of Tanjore was the second and the most illustrious of the Mahratta rulers of Tanjore. Rightly does he occupy the most honoured place in the galaxy of royal musicologists, royal composers and royal patrons', remarks Dr. S. Seetha lately of the Madras University. While a very large number of works are attributed to him, the music of only one, *Sankara Palliseva Prabhandha*, a geya nataka is available. His *Tyagesa Pada(s)* in sanskrit, mahratti and telugu testify to his eminence, scholarship and mastery in language and music. His *Saptasagara Suladi Prabandha Lila Daru* in mahratti is a ragatalamalika with diverse musical forms revealing his high intellectual attainments and musicianship. *Sahaji Ragalakshana* (in manuscript) is his contribution as a musicologist. 'Tyagesa' and 'Tyaga' are his signatures signifying his devotion to the Presiding Deity of Tiruvarur.



Son of Ekoji I and Dipambika, Sahaji had probably Appa Sastri alias Sri Parabrahmananda Yogi as his spiritual preceptor.

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### **SAKUNTALA NARASIMHAN - MUSICIAN - JOURNALIST : (b. 1940)**

If there are a few lady-musicians who are not only proficient in diverse musical styles but are prominent in other fields as well, undoubtedly Sakuntala Narasimhan is one among them. She was born at Kanchipuram, of G.S. Raman and Sugandha in a musical family. Her grandmother was a disciple of the renowned Naina Pillai and Puducheri Rangaswami Ayyangar and her mother was quite felicitous in vocal and on veena and in Carnatic and Hindustani music. Sakuntala naturally inherited the legacy of the family - which seems to run in the female line and enlarged her musical training and knowledge with a Sangita Vidwan diploma from the Central College of Carnatic Music with distinction. Ustad Hafeez Ahmed Khan was her preceptor in Hindustani music.

Made her debut at the age of ten at Delhi in a duet with her mother. During the last two decades she seems to be running against the clock and the calender in giving lecture- demonstrations and concerts in India and abroad and pursuing her hefty journalistic endeavours. Her lectures in musicology are relished by the lay and the *cognoscenti* and she has bagged many gold medals for her concerts and lectures on musicology.

Sakuntala Narasimhan taught Musicology at the Bombay University and has been examiner for the same since 1977-78. A post-graduate in economics and an award-winning journalist, she is fully equipped to make analytic probes into the immense panorama of Music of India. Was guest faculty at SNDT and Bombay University. Musical legacy and training, felicity in different languages and journalistic pursuits gave her the ideal field to project her talents successfully. Sakuntala Narasimhan is well known as a full-time journalist and later Assistant Editor, *Femina* and Columnist on women's issues and consumer affairs for *Deccan Herald* since 1984. Got the outstanding Woman Journalist Award for 1984 and Runner-up Woman Journalist and *Eve's Weekly* Awards 1984 and 1986. Her published articles number a gigantic 950 till now! Was Vice-President, Consumer Guidance Society of India, 1989 and 1990.

Concert tours:	Japan, Singapore, France, USA, Kenya.
Publications:	Invitation to Indian Music (and four other books on other topics.)
Disc recordings:	CBS release 1989

#### **Honours & Titles:**

To her acquisition of gold medals and awards, she has added the titles of 'Sangita Ratna' in 1953 and 'Sur Mani' in 1974.

**MYLATTUR V. SAMI AYYAR - MRIDANGIST:****(20<sup>th</sup> Century)**

Sami Ayyar had his training in percussion under his uncle Mylattu Krishna Ayyar and in 1938 entered the Annamalai University as Lecturer in Mridangam. Has authored the book '*Mridanga Paada Murai*' released by the University.

\* \* \*

**SAMI BHAGAVATAR - DEVOTIONAL MUSIC ARTISTE:**

Son of Vengu Bhagavatar, the bhajan specialist, Sami Bhagavatar was so much dedicated to devotional music that he would go to Madras during the *Dhanur masa* to do bhajan along the main streets of Mylapore, since it was then the loveliest place on earth which exuded charm, calm, spiritual and musical environment and was the sanctuary and haven of bhagavatas, musicians and music-lovers. (And all that is lost now with the main streets around the tank and the temple being studded with hundreds of vendors and petty shops. Music would be the last art to peep in anywhere near or flourish. If music dried up on the streets, the beautiful tank has not seen a spoonful of water for half a decade and over! All the water inlets stand blocked.)

Bhagavatar enjoyed a pleasing voice, an immense repertoire of Tyagaraja's songs and laid stress on the bhava and rasa of each song. He attracted massive crowds.

\* \* \*

**TANJORE SANKARA AYYAR - VOCALIST-COMPOSER: (b.Jany.14 1924).**

A talented composer in *apoorva* ragas and a scholar - expert in the presentation of the nuances and finer aspects of tamil songs, Sankara Ayyar is a senior vocalist. 'He is one of our seldom heard vocalists whose music is shorn of shallow smartness and precocity and who is a repository of the purest tradition', states K.S. Mahadevan. His compositions come up for constant rendition.

Born at Toga Malai in Tiruchirapalli district, of Venkatesa Ayyar and Kuppalammal, he had his training in music under his musician - grandfather, Krishna Ayyar for ten years. Later he joined the Ramanathan College of Music of the Annamalai University and got the 'Sangeetha Bhushanam' diploma. At the College, he had the benefit of training under stalwarts like Tiger Varadachariar and Sathur Krishna Ayyangar. Made his debut at the Ramakrishna Home, Madras in 1937, when C.Saraswati Bai could not take up the harikatha concert listed for the day. In Carnatic music, it has been found that juniors who substituted for senior artistes had shot up to the top like Ariyakudi Ramanuja Ayyangar, G.N. Balasubramaniam and Rajamanickam Pillai. Was Principal, Tamil Isai College, Devakottai and Professor, College of Carnatic Music, Madras and Shanmukhananda Sabha Music School, Bombay.

His compositions are in sanskrit, telugu and tamil and comprise varnam, pada kirtan, javali, etc. Several of these are now handled by musicians and dance *Ramanamame (Desh)* was his first which incirbed his name in the list memorable composers. *Gitavadya Natana (Natakapriya)*, *Manasarani (Saramati)* and *Balakrishna Paadame Thunai (Vishnupriya)* are other popu pieces among his forty compositions.

Titles and Hohours:

Certificate of Merit from the Music Academy	(1986)
Title of 'Nadakanal' from Bharath Kalachar.	
Kalaimamani from T.N.Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram	(1992)

Sankara Ayyar is a sampradaya vidwan who believes in the Carnatic *B* being followed in essence and spirit. His lecture- demonstrations are instructi "He is a veritable walking encyclopaedia."

\* \* \*

**TANJORE T.T. SANKARA AYYAR - VIOLINIST:** (b. 19

Son of Tanjore Duraiswami Ayyar, Sankara Ayyar had his violin train initially under his father and then under Trichy Violin Venugopala Pillai. Me his debut at Tanjore and had provided accompaniment to prominent artis including the Women Vocal Trinity, MSS, MLV and DKP. Has been awarded 'title 'Kalaimamani' by Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram in 1976.

\* \* \*

**M. R. SANKARAMOORTY - VOCALIST:** (b. 1922)

Place of birth: Madulakura in Hassan district.

Sankaramurty had his initial training with Rama Bhatta, a bhagavata, lee telugu at Nandalur (A.P.) and in his thirteenth year underwent training in mu with Rama Josier and then Chembai Vaidyanatha Ayyar and R Keshavamurthy. His hunger for music was so intense that he learnt Hindust music from Bhatkhande at Bombay. His musical training would seem to h taken him around different states. Returning to Bangalore, he enlarged repertoire and knowledge of the art with further training under Belakuv Varadaraja Ayyangar and Sathur Krishna Ayyangar.

Was giving concerts as duo with G.L. Ganesa Sastri. Has been giv concerts on the All India Radio and elsewhere. Established the Guruk Gana Nilaya, Bangalore.

Publications:

About forty numbers on music in kannada including *Pancharatna kirta* and *Bakhti Sangita Sudha* (at prices within the reach of all).

\* \* \*

**T.S. SANKARAN - FLAUTIST:****(b.October 28, 1932)**

Place of birth

Sathanur in Tanjore district

Note: There are various places named Sathanur including one in South Arcot district where there is an irrigation reservoir and another near Saivagamalai where Pundarika Vittala was born.

Parents

: T.N. Sambasivam, flautist and T.S. Alarmelu Ammal.

Sankaran had his training in music under his father, a prominent flautist attached to the Tiruvaduthurai Mutt and Court Vidwan, Mysore. Later he had his gurukulavasa under the renowned T.R. Mahalingam (Mali) and continued with him to the last so devotedly that Mahalingam called him 'Ekalavya' and treated him as his brother. Sankaran has been giving concerts on the All India Radio, Doordarshan, sabhas, etc., and in India and abroad having made his debut at the tender age of nine at Avudayarkoil where St. Manickavachakar has built a magnificent temple for the invisible Linga. He follows the vocal style of rendition like Mali. Has choreographed some Tirupugazh songs in accordance with the old *Santha Thalam* mode. Sankaran's rendition is soft and soothing. His concerts are 'aesthetically planned and fascinatingly rendered'.

Was Staff Artiste, All India Radio, Delhi for five years.

Concert tours abroad : USA, Canada, UK and France.

Honours & Titles : Kalaimamani by Tamil Nadu Iyal Isai Nataka Mandram  
in 1986.  
Nadakkanal by Nadakkanal (Bharat Kalachar), Madras  
in 1988.

\* \* \*

**SUCHINDRAM SANKARANARAYANA BHAGAVATAR @ ( 1846-1888)**  
**AYYAH BHAGAVATAR - VAINIKA :**

A prominent veena vidwan of Trivandrum, Sankaranarayana Bhagavatar was the elder brother of Suchindram Padmanabha Bhagavatar. Had his training under Sathu Bhagavatar, a palace musician. T. Lakshmana Pillai of Travancore pays rich tributes to Sankaranarayana Bhagavatar, his guru.

\* \* \*

**K. SANKARANARAYANA PANICKER - NAGASWARAM ARTISTE:**

**(b. Jany. 9, 1911)**

Place of birth

: Ambalapuzha, Kerala

Panicker had his training in nagaswaram with P.S. Veeruswami Pillai of Tiruvidaimarudur, who is seen to have had K. Gopalakrishna Panicker (b. Novr. 11 1914), K. Gopalakrishna Panicker (b. 1919) and K. Chellappa Panicker (b. 1924), the latter two being called the Haripad Brothers also, as his disciples from Kerala. Pillai had thus helped in inducing the high standard of

nagaswara rendition in Kerala. Panicker had ample scope to hear the different styles of other maestros of the Tanjore Delta.

Tiruvizha Jayasankar, a popular nagaswaram vidwan, is among the disciples of Sankaranarayana Panicker.

Disc recordings:

Concert tour: Sri Lanka.

\* \* \*

### **C.S. SANKARA SIVAM - VOCO PERCUSSIONIST : (b.June 28, 1908)**

A respected artiste and teacher who had shaped the musical aspirations and destinies of many in the twin fields of vocal music and mridangam. His disciples include his son, C.S. Murugabhupathy, Ramnad Eswaran and Raghavan in mridangam, and Ramnad Krishnan and T.N. Seshagopalan in vocal music. Sankara Sivam is in the direct line of the disciples of Tyagaraja through Manambuchavadi Venkatasubba Ayyar, T.S. Sabhesa Ayyar, Sivasamban and Harikesanallur Muthiah Bhagavatar with whom he had his musical training for a full decade. He was versatile on violin, veena and jalatarangam and was a prominent vidwan in South Tamil Nadu. Sankara Sivam was Principal, Madurai Sri Sadguru Samajam, Member, Music Academy Experts' Committee and had been on AIR Audition Board and Madurai University Syllabus Committee.

Parents	:	Chitsabhai Servai, Ramnad and Pappammal.
Titles & Honours	:	Madura Kala Pravina from Sadguru Sabha, Madurai Kalaimamani from Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram Samasthana Vidwan, Ramnad 1945 Honoured by Mummurthi Vizha Committee, Tiruvarur 1991
Concert tour	:	Sri Lanka.

\* \* \*

### **B.V.K. SASTRY - MUSICOLOGIST: (b.1916)**

Place of birth	:	Nanjangud, Karnataka
Musical training under	:	Chikka Rama Rao, Asthana Vidwan, Mysore Palace.

A multi-faceted person, Sastry got a diploma in painting like Madras S. Rajam. He enhanced his knowledge and talents in music by contacts with professionals. He is conversant with different other arts like bommalattam (puppet-play), dancing, etc. Learnt Hindustani music too. Sastri has been contributing numerous articles on music, dance, etc., for over thirty years to the *Illustrated Weekly of India*, *Economic Times*, etc. He was in the Treasury Department of the State Government. His articles have clarity and depth.

Sastry is connected with many institutions like:

Lalit Kala Academy, Sangeet Natak Akademy,

Karnataka State Sangeet Natak Academy,  
Bharatiya Musicological Sangeetha Sadas,  
All India Radio Audition Board and research bodies.

### Honours & Titles:

Akashwani Annual Award  
Sangeet Natak Akademy Senior Cultural Fellowship.  
Certificate of Merit from the Music Academy, Madras.  
Gana Kala Bhushana from Bangalore Gayana Samajam.  
Honours from the Karnataka Nritya Academy, 1987-88.

\* \* \*

### **Dr. R. SATYANARAYANA - MUSICOLOGIST:**

**(b. 1926)**

Third of the distinguished Mysore Brothers and son of Ramalinga Ayya and Varalakshmi Amma, Satyanarayana learnt music from his mother and his elder brother R. Chandrasekhariah. He took his M.Sc. from the Mysore University and became Professor of Chemistry, Sarada Vilas College. Got his D.Lit. He has been giving lectures on music in and outside India and has authored many articles and books. '*Kudumiamalai Inscriptions on Music*' one of his works was published by the Varalakshmi Academies of Fine Arts, Mysore, jointly established by him and his elder brother. He is a Member of many associations like the American Ethnomusicological Society.

\* \* \*

### **SAVITRI RAJAN - MUSICOLOGIST:**

**(1908 - May 6, 1991)**

Daughter of Dr. Seethapathi Ayyar and a disciple of Tiger Varadachariar and Veenai Dhanammal, Savitri Rajan chose to refrain from giving concerts but was giving lecture-demonstrations. Has published '*Sobillu Saptaswara*', a music primer in collaboration with Michael and brought out the documentary '*The Flying Bird*',. A cassette recording based on her publication titled '*The Splendorous Seven Notes*' has also been released. Nadopasana was her passionate mission.

L.P. record: 'Homage to my Guru Veena Dhanam' - a veena recital.

\* \* \*

### **RAJA SERFOJI (SARABHOJI) II - ROYAL COMPOSER & PATRON:**

**(Reigned 1798 - 1832)**

Adopted son of Raja Tulajaji (1764-1787), Serfoji ascended the *gadi* at the age of nine to be promptly deposed by Amar Singh. He got back the throne in 1799 but it was the physical possession of the *gadi sans* power. Neither he reigned in reality nor did he rule. He had to meekly surrender the principality

for a pension and a life of robust leisure! He played to the tune set by the British and constructed the monument 'Manora' on the sea - coast near Sethubhava-chatram to celebrate the success of the British over Napoleon at Waterloo in 1814! But the political non-entity was a prince among cultured elites. The fine distinction between rulers like Rajah Serfoji and Swati Tirunal Maharajah and others elsewhere in their conduct subsequent to the loss of power has to be kept in view. While Serfoji, etc., turned to art, architecture, sculpture, music, literature, etc., several ex-rulers enjoyed the fruits of pension without responsibility. While the former patronised artistes, constructed libraries, etc., the others amassed varieties in zenanas ! It is to the pristine glory of the former that their sober, native wishes never learnt to stray! From the view point of culture, the loss of power was indeed a blessing. Probably like Napoleon, he too should have thought that 'the throne is but a piece of wood covered with velvet'; but unlike him, inscribed his name in the eternal pages of cultural history!

Serfoji's claim to distinction primarily lies in making the Saraswati Mahal Library a storehouse of knowledge and research. The library, of course, was there before, called the 'Saraswati Bhandaram' but it is to his magnificent vision and foresight, its elevation and glory are indebted. The library houses 30000 sanskrit, 2500 telugu, 5000 marathi, 2000 tamil and 500 in other languages books of varied importance. Manuscripts acquired by him were attested by him which indicates his love of books etc. Keenly devoted to medicine and science, he instituted the Dhanwantri Mahal, gathered eminent physicians and compiled highly valuable prescriptions for ills and diseases in eighteen volumes.

An ardent devotee of music and patron of musicians and composers, his period saw the Carnatic Trinity, Tanjore Quartette, Kottaiyur Sivakolundu Desikhar of *Sarabhendra Kuravanji* and Abhirami Bhattar of *Abhirami Anthadi*. His Western orientation drew him towards Western music and he started the famous Tanjore Palace Band. Nava Vidya Kalanidhi was started to give training in oriental learning. Shorn of political power and administration, his interests and talents were 'amazingly varied and the varied subjects found an abundant place in his capable and capacious intellect'. He had 360 musicians attached to his court. He was himself a very good writer and composer. His compositions included —

Radhakrishna Vilasa, Ganesa Lilarnava,  
Mohini Mahesa Parinaya, Devendra Kuravanji Nataka,  
Ganga Visveswara Parinayam, Ganesa Vijayam,  
Kiratarajuna Nirupana and Tristalli Tirtha Yatra Lavani and dance pieces in marathi.

His nirupanas present a single theme with different dance pieces. 'He seems to be the first composer of recent times to introduce the *ekartha* - single theme concept in dance compositions, the features of which would seem to be the precursors of most of the compositions of the compact series later delineated

by the Tanjore Quartette'. Each nirupana has Jaya Jaya, Sharanu, Alaru, Sollu, Sabda, Varna, Pada, Swarajati, Abhinaya pada, Tillana, Jakkini, Geeta, Prabandha, Tripata, Shlokavarna, Kauta and Mangala. (Suchetha Chapekar).

The galaxy who adorned his court included:

Sonti Venkataramanayya  
Tanjore Quartette  
Ghanam Krishna Ayyar  
Anai - Ayya (Viriboni)  
Venkatasubba Ayyar  
Vedanayakam Pillai and  
Paidala Gurumurti Sastri

It would appear that each one of the 360 musicians had his turn on a particular day for special concert at the palace.

Thus Serfoji has been immortalised by the grace of Goddess Saraswati though disowned by Goddess Parvati having been sustained with pomp and glory by Goddess Lakshmi!

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### **VEENAI SESA AYYAR - VAINIKA & COMPOSER: (b.September 21, 1921)**

Place of birth	:	Madurai
Parents	:	S. Ramakrishna Ayyar, a connoisseur of music and R. Subbulakshmi, a classical singer.
General Qualification	:	B.Sc. (Maths), B.Sc.(Eng), F.I.E., F.I.P. E., Chartered Engineer.
Post held	:	Chief Engineer in the Defence Services (since retired).
Training in music under	:	Trivandrum Krishna Bhagavata and M.A. Kalyanakrishna Bhagavata - both eminent vainikas.
Debut	:	Chamber Concert before G.N. Balasubramaniam and his guru in 1941.
Tours	:	Lecture-Demonstrations in Minneapolis, USA in 1986.

A gentleman of profound grace and robust culture, Sesha Ayyar is multi-faceted. His late wife and a daughter on veena and another daughter with bharatanatyam presented an ideal home humming with art and music and Sesha Ayyar presided over it for long and continues to maintain that atmosphere now with disciples. He is a composer of merit and elegance in tamil, telugu and sanskrit. His first publication titled '*Nritya Geetanjali*' - Part I containing jatiswarams, padams, pada varnams, javalis and tillanas was released appropriately by Nritya Choodamani Kamala Lakshman on January 16, 1990. Several of his compositions have been successfully performed by artistes of merit already. His songs have won high approbation from danseuses, art-lovers



and critics of standing like T.S. Parthasarathy and K.S. Mahadevan. Swamimalai Rajarethinam, one of the foremost authorities on bharatanatya, spoke eloquently on the fine and delectable concepts, sublime sentiments, emotive situations and artistic contrivances in the songs enabling dancers to bring out their artistic genius, emotional instincts to full focus. Sesha Ayyar takes the interest and trouble to guide the artistes in the finer intricacies, the underlying bhava and rasa and the varied scope for portrayal.

'*Nritya Geetanjali*' Part II containing pushpanjali, alarippu, kavuvthams, padams, etc., in seven languages is due for release shortly. The innovative compositions excel in prosodic finesse brimming with emotional themes, poetic and dramatic appeal and thrilling potential for succinct portrayals by artistes. Ayyar has indented and drawn on his expertise in the rhythm of veena to present measured rhythm and studied melody in complementary roles while presenting his dance pieces to the world of bharatanatya. Thoughtful conception, selection of apt episodes from epics and spiritual treatises, appropriate ragas and graces embellish his compositions. The skill of an engineer in the musician - composer ensures precision, consummate artistry and performance audit - a case of 'Dance-Music Engineering'.

V.P. Dhananjayan of Bharata Kalanjali feels that 'it is a dire necessity to induct new streams of lyrics and music to dance as practitioners are increasing day by day and in that context too, Ayyar's compositions are most welcome'. There are not many composers of eminence of songs for bharatanatya today and Sesha Ayyar's efforts and contribution demand special approbation. Plato insisted on a knowledge of music and mathematics for admission to his school. Sesha Ayyar is an apt and ideal candidate Plato would have been glad to take in - not as a mere student but as a tutor !

Veena Sesha Ayyar is choreographer, photographer, portrait painter and a musicologist which help him to visualise from different angles, moods, bhavas and other finer aspects which enter into the theme of his songs. Ayyar is a restless soul soaked in fragrant art.

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**KOMANDURI SESHADRI - VIOLINIST:**

**(b. Jany. 31, 1949 )**

An off-spring of a hereditary musical family, Komanduri Seshadri, son of Ananthacharyulu and Kanakammal was born at Guntur. He is a Lecturer in Violin, G.V.R. Music College, Vijayawada for the last sixteen years. Has been giving concerts for over two decades in vocal, violin and viola on the All India Radio and elsewhere.

Academic Qualification : Bachelor of Commerce.

Training and qualification in music : Initial training under father, a vainika and paternal uncle Thirumalacharyulu, also a vainika.

Diploma in Violin and vocal, Andhra University  
1969-1970

Master's Degree in Music from Mysore University 1973.

Advanced training under M. Chandrasekharan,  
the prominent violinist.

K. Seshadri has been giving lecture-demonstrations in different languages and has established a record for twenty-four hour non-stop singing of Tyagabrahma kritis in 1988. His sons K.A.S. Rajan and K.V. Krishna, both in their teens, are his disciples and have been giving voco-violin concerts.

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## **S. SESHAGIRI RAO - VIOLINIST:**

**(b. 1944)**

Father :

S.V. Subba Rao

Seshagiri Rao had his training with his father and enlarged the scope of his violin play and skill by constantly hearing prominent violinists. Rao was an artiste with All India Radio and is a competent accompanist.

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## **DEDICATION WITHDRAWN**

"Ludwig van Beethoven had planned to dedicate his Third Symphony, one of the towering landmarks of Western Music, to Napoleon, but struck the dedication from the title page of the manuscript when he heard that Napoleon had crowned himself emperor."

Beethoven used his art to express his revolutionary spirit in a way that no previous artist has done. Has any one done so later?

When Napoleon bombarded Vienna in 1809, Beethoven had to protect his ears with pillows to protect his already damaged hearing.

\* \* \*

## **LOUSY REVIEW**

"I have read your lousy review of Margaret's concert. I've come to the conclusion that you are an 'eight ulcer man on four ulcer pay'... Some day I hope to see you. When that happens, you'll need a new nose, a lot of beef-steak for black eyes and perhaps a supporter below."

— President Harry S. Truman - in response to *Washington Post* critic Pant Hume's review of a concert by Margaret Truman, Time 18 . 12 . 1950. (Encyclopaedia of Music -Alan Blackwood - Wardlock Ltd., London.)

\* \* \*

**VEENA SESHANNA - VEENA MAESTRO:****(1850 - 1926)**

'What Bradman was to cricket, Seshanna was to veena. Veena and Seshanna were synonymous. He was a *nadayogi* who lived like a colossus in the field of veena.'

— K. Srikanthiah

"His music flowed like sweet honey. Seshanna did not believe in depth or intensity. He played on the veena and with it. His regal mien and the joy he diffused all around him by his own ecstasy was nothing if not contagious. His nimble fingers flew up and down the octave, weaving figures of three's and four's like a dummy horse drum and came to a stop with a bang, striking the four strings together."

— (R. Rangaramanuja Ayyangar)

Karnataka has always had a fancy for veena and patronage of **Mysore** Royalty to vainikas has been proverbial. The golden age of cultural renaissance in Mysore reached its peak, according to Prof. R.N. Doreswami, during the reigns of –

Mummadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar	1794 - 1868
Chamaraja Wodeyar	1863 - 1894
Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar	1884 - 1940 and
Jayachamaraja Wodeyar	1919 - 1974.

Broadly speaking according to the learned Professor, three styles were in vogue, viz., Tanjore, Mysore and Andhra – with the following characteristics:

**Tanjore Style:**

Bass tonal quality as a result of using thick guage strings and tuning to a low key (sruti); vilamba laya with long curves produced by deflecting the strings. Masculine in quality with more accent on vocal-based rendering.

**Mysore style:**

Sweet tonal quality with sharpness and clarity comparable to female voice. Thinner guage strings tuned to a higher key; fingering and plucking harmonious and melodious by using the *tripanchaka gamaka* on all the three strings, *Madhya laya* mostly and also *druta laya*. Tana had a special place.

**Andhra Style:**

Resembled the Tanjore style but it has become a combination of the other two.

M.J. Srinivasa Ayyangar opines that vocalization of veena is the main characteristic of the Mysore style. Perhaps 'all said and done, it is only one style — veena style'.

Veena Seshanna was the foremost of veena artistes of Karnataka and hailed from a long line of vainikas. Son of Veena Bakshi Chikkaramappa, a vainika and asthana vidwan, Seshanna had his training in veena and vocal with his father. A prodigy, he played a complex pallavi at the age of ten in the presence of the Maharaja and vidwans on a Shivaratri day and came to royal notice. Was an acknowledged player in his twenties. His '*meetu*' - plucking of the string was mature, his imaginative rendering attractive and his tala immaculate. When he lost his father at the age of sixteen, Seshanna continued his training with Dodda Seshanna in veena and vocal with the renowned Mysore Sadasiva Rao. As umpires do in cricket to count the balls bowled, his sister would keep tamarind seeds to count the number of times he practised avarthas and his rigorous practice was comparable to those of Tirukodikaval Krishna Ayyar and Dwaram Venkataswami Naidu - violinists, Venkataramana Das and Sangameswara Sastri - vainikas and Konerirajapuram Vaidyanatha Ayyar, the vocalist. Seshanna was an adept in playing on violin, sitar, swarabat, organ, piano, and jaltarang also and would give full-scale concerts on them. He mastered Hindustani and Western music and so would give varied concerts. He enjoyed others' music and rewarded them too.

He was the kingpin, centre of attraction in all musical endeavours in Karnataka, was asthana vidwan, Mysore and was honoured by the Gaekwad of Baroda with a palanquin! His veena play was pleasing; played rapid passage of flageolet notes. He introduced the use of different fingers to produce notes in ascending and descending series. 'He was playing not so much on the string of the veena as on the heart-strings of the audience'. It was all due to his innate genius and the hard discipline to which he and his co-disciple Subbanna had been subjected to by his well-meaning sister Venkamma. After all, he was not born with a silver spoon in his mouth like Bakshi Subbanna, another maestro. Seshanna used to reminisce,

**'There was a time when I used to roam about in the streets of Mysore carrying the veena on my shoulders looking for homes where festoons were exhibited outside for chance invitation to play on veena. I have also given many concerts for as low a fee as Rs. five.'**

— K. Srikantiah

If Venkamma at home insisted on macro practice, guru Dodda Seshanna was a match for her in insisting on a very high degree of proficiency and specialisation by practice. His nod of appreciation or satisfaction would not come easily. To borrow the words of Nedunuri Krishnamurti, he '*taught music and not songs*'. Once, Seshanna did rigorous practice of tanas but the guru's nod was not forthcoming even after four days! The disciple murmured.

'Who is there? Get me my veena', thundered the guru,

'Sit down Seshanna; let me play for you. You may find out for yourself whether your practice is enough.'

The boy having listened with tears rolling down his cheeks, stood up and in choked voice with his upper cloth tied round his waist confessed -

'Sir, I had the conceit to think that nobody else practised as hard as I did. Pray, forgive me.'

Dodda Seshanna softened and said:

'Look, my dear Seshanna! If I was hard on you, it was only because I was interested in your progress. I used to practice each tana a hundred times. Only he who practised the hard way acquires this art.'

Seshanna was a devoted disciple; he practised and achieved profound skill, expertise and proficiency. Vasudevacharya says that the audience sat spellbound when Seshanna played. Seshanna had also given violin accompaniment to Vasudevacharya, his disciple and had played jalatarangam at the royal court. The multi-faceted genius placed Mysore on the musical map of India and his name is cherished to this day. Mysore was a beehive of high musical activity during his days. And his tall stature and fame did not dislodge his liberal piety and spiritual attributes. His lofty approach to veena was clearly spiritual. He said:

**'A good veena recital should witness more tonal quality and be soft and soothing - *madhura veenaranitam panchama subhagascha kokilalapaha*. Extraneous sound from frets and strings should never jar the ear.'**

*Sankarabharana, Kalyani, Khamas, Begada and Kedaragoula* were favourite ragas with him. His layajana was very sharp and precise; would play scores of avartas without counting by hand. His fame spread far and wide.

Like the Gaekwad of Baroda, the Rajah of Ramnad honoured him by asking him to give a week-long concert. The rulers of Gwalior, Indore, Bhopal, Pudukottai and Gadwal showered gifts and honours on him. King George V (then Prince of Wales) was so charmed that he took back with him a portrait of Seshanna; and Mahatma Gandhi heard him play for long hours! There was in his rendition spiritual message and appeal to the soul decidedly! E.R. Sethuram of Mysore writes that it was said that he got more than forty todas, innumerable necklaces, hundreds of diamond rings, etc. (There was no Income-tax or Wealth Tax !) As if his name could not be weighed against all these and the fame he commands still, Ganabharati, Mysore has erected a fine auditorium dedicated to him and brought out a souvenir in 1991. There are stalwart disciples of Seshanna in Prof. R.N. Doreswamy, V. Doreswamy Iyengar and M.J. Srinivasa Iyengar besides the late Vasudevachar to carry on his message.

He was a composer too. His compositions comprise eleven swarajatis, nine varnas, sixteen kritis and seventeen tillanas. Five are in kannada and the rest are in telugu. They are rich in raga bhava and scope for gamakas and he has availed of rare talas and rare ragas in ragamalikas. His signature is 'Sesha'.

Veena Venkataramana Das was a cousin of his in the third degree. Well-versed in astrology, he is credited with forecasting the date of his death, July 25, 1926.

Seshanna enjoyed an imposing personality and would look like a sage on the stage. Veena was his breath. In line with the description of the Lord by Tyagaraja '*Oka mata, oka banamu, oka pathni vruthude*', Seshanna's one world was veena, his arrow of unflinching direction was his handling the instrument and in short, his wedding with veena was sublime and total.

The advent, eminence and popularity of Seshanna gave a marked tilt in favour of vainikas in Karnataka which enjoys a rich crop of veena artistes still.

\* \* \*

#### **D. SESHAPPA - PERCUSSIONIST:**

**(b.1907)**

Place of birth	:	Mysore
Father & Guru	:	Khande Dasappa

Seshappa has had wide practice and was Asthana Vidwan, Mysore Court. He presided over the Karnataka Gana Kala Parishat Conference in 1991 and was conferred with the title of 'Gana Kala Bhooshana'. He pleaded with musicians at the conference to have konnakol, kanjira or ghatam as additional accompaniment as these are languishing for want of adequate patronage and with the organisers to disburse the remuneration to the side accompanists direct and not channelise it through the chief artiste since in many cases the quota of water released from the reservoir does not reach the fields to the benefit of which it is let out! Part or the whole of it gets impounded illicitly *en route*! (It is criminal misappropriation he referred to.)

Seshappa exhibited percussive talents even in his sixth year. As mridangam was becoming popular in Karnataka in the thirties, he switched over from tabla to mridangam. Has accompanied prominent musicians and was State Examiner for Examinations. A talented artiste.

\* \* \*

#### **TANJORE SETHURAMA RAO - MRIDANGIST:**

**(c.1850 - 1920)**

A famous mridangist in Kerala, Sethurama Rao had given accompaniment to distinguished musicians like Coimbatore Raghava Ayyar and Parameswara Bhagavatar. He was getting financial aid from Travancore Government. His play had lesser '*meettus*' and more of '*purattals*' and was known for loud projections. Would not take on solo (tani)! Probably he was unique in this sphere. The reason for the surrender of a privilege is not known.

\* \* \*

**S. SHANKAR - VOCALIST:****(20th Cent.)**

A popular vocalist, Shankar has been giving concerts for over two decades. He learnt music with Vallabham Kalyanasundaram and had been graded 'A' with All India Radio. He is an Auditor in the office of the Accountant-General.

\* \* \*

**KARANTHAI R. SHANMUGAM PILLAI - PERCUSSIONIST:****(b. July 17, 1915)**

Son of Rathinam Pillai, Shanmugam Pillai had his training in tavil under Tiruvalaputhur Pasupathi Tavilkarar and later under Needamangalam Meenakshisundaram Pillai. Was accompanist to stalwart nagaswara artistes like P.S. Veeruswami Pillai and Tiruvizhimalalai Brothers. Has received appreciation from a wide circle of admirers and the title of 'Kalaimamani' from the Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram in 1974

\* \* \*

**TIRUPPAMBURAM Dr.S. SHANMUGHASUNDARAM -  
VOCALIST/PEDAGOGUE:****(b.Sepr.15, 1937)**

Rich voice, chaste pronunciation, aesthetic presentation and passionate faith in Tamil Isai qualify the successful life of S. Shanmughasundaram, who hails from a hereditary family of instrumental musicians and a village noted for its role in the field of drama and music. Tiruppamburam in Tanjore district is just two kilometers from the author's village and is surrounded by musical cradles like Mudicondan, Keeranur, Tiruvizhimalalai and Kothavasal.

Parents	:	N. Somasundaram & Pattammal (Sangita Kalanidhi T.N. Swaminatha Pillai was his paternal uncle.)
Musical Training	:	First under his father. Sangeetha Vidwan diploma from the Government Music College, Madras. Isai Mani Course at the Tamil Isai Kalloori, Madras. Attended a course at the Sangeetha Vadyalaya of Prof.P. Sambamurti. Teacher's Training Certificate. Doctorate

**Posts held :**

Inspector of Music Schools under T.N. Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram.  
Lecturer, Government Music College, Madras.  
Professor/Principal, Government Music College, Madurai  
Principal, Government Music College (now Training Centre), Madras since 1988.  
Member, University Music Boards.

Disc recordings:

Publications :

Tamil Isai Nunukkam  
Keertanai Iyal.

Honours & Titles :

Kalaimamani,  
Perumbana Nambi,  
Isaimamani,

Isai Kalai Selvar,  
Tamil Isai Mavendar,  
Sangita Sagaram.

Shanmughasundaram conducted a music school named 'Saraswati Carnataka Music School' and a music sabha called 'Swara Ragalaya'. He takes creditable role in spreading Tamil Isai and starting Irai Isai Pani Mandram and Tamil Isai Valarchi Mandram. Has been taking part in seminars and presenting concerts in addition to his collegiate responsibilities. Enjoys pleasant receptivity. An enjoyable voice and a good repertoire of tamil songs are his *forte*.

\* \* \*

**VALANGIMAN SHANMUGHASUNDARAM PILLAI - TAVIL VIDWAN:**

**(b.April 2, 1914)**

Born at Valangiman (from which hailed the eminent V.S.Srinivasa Sastri), of Arumugham Pillai, Shanmughasundaram Pillai had his training under his father, and his brother and later under the renowned Nachiarkoil Raghava Pillai. He was a leading vidwan for five decades and a popular one.

He is a Vice President of the Tyagabrahma Mahotsava Sabha. Has visited Sri Lanka. The Music Academy, Madras honoured him in 1977 with a Certificate of Merit and the Sangeet Natak Akademy, Delhi conferred on him the Akademy Award in 1985.

\* \* \*

**SHANTA NARASIMHAN - VEENA ARTISTE :**

**(b.September 22, 1938)**

Born at Bangalore, of Janardhana Iyengar, a prominent veena vidwan and a disciple of Veena Venkatagiriappa of Mysore, Shanta Narasimhan had her initial training with her father. She had training in vocal music under R. Shankara Murthy and R.K. Srikantan. Made her debut in 1960 at Sri Ramapuram Rama Mandiram, Bangalore during the Ramotsava. She is giving a large number of concerts on the All India Radio and elsewhere.

Concert tours :

U.K. USA and Canada.

\* \* \*



**SHASHANK - PRECOCIOUS FLAUTIST:****(b.October 14, 1978)**

Place of birth :	Rudrapathnam, Karnataka - a nursery of musicians.
Parents :	M.N.Subramanyam & A.A.Hemalata.
Musical training under :	Preliminary training under father, a disciple of Dindigul S.P.Natarajan. R.K.Srikantan for three years K.V.Narayanaswamy for 3 ½ years.

Thirteen-year old Shashank is now a student in the VIII standard and already he is a well-known flautist. Made his debut at Adelaide, Australia on September 30, 1990 (in a hurry not to wait for the dawn in the Indian subcontinent four hours later!) and in India at the Sastri Hall on December 20, 1990 for Sruti Laya Seva of Karaikudi Mani. It is said that when Flute Mali heard six-year old Shashank play the flute, he advised that Shashank should be given training in vocal music allowing him to develop his own style in flute and his advice probably had its striking results. The boy's self-evident musical talents in the garden and care of a musically-trained father soon began to assert and he became a sensation when he entered the concert stage in 1990.

'The most prolific of all Western composers, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was noted for his legendary speed of composition and at six, his piano play was a feat.' Many child prodigies have adorned the Indian panorama like the glittering Flute Mali (T.R. Mahalingam), Veena Seshanna, S.G. Kittappa, Tiruvarur Rajayee, Veena Gayatri, Ravi Kiran and Mandolin Srinivas. Shashank has joined this prestigious club now. He is reputed to have identified ragas and their place in the Melakarta chart at the incredible age of three! This is so much like Ravi Kiran, the reigning chitra veena player. His vocal training was helped by scholarships. His intrinsic merit was taken note of when he was provided with a berth by the Music Academy, Madras at an important slot during its annual festival. The progress of Shashank is to be watched. He plays with confidence and the melody of his flute is sweet.

Concert tours	:	Australia, Singapore and Malaysia 1990
Disc recordings	:	ICD and one cassette.

'With punches of alluring tone and subtlety, he distils perfectly classical forms out of the notes of ragas. He is maturing incredibly fast', writes K.S. Mahadevan (I.E.)

'His concert had such a timeless serenity, enchantment and rich content as to make him a dazzling but not an extravagant genius', writes another.

**SHYAMALA VENKATESWARAN - VOCALIST:****(b.Feb.14, 1947)**

Place of birth	:	Madras
Parents	:	Sangeetha Vidwan V. Rama Ayyar, a disciple of Melakaveri A. Ramamurty Ayyar & Mukthambal.
Musical training	:	Under her father, besides Pallavi singing and kritis from A.R. Kannan and Kritis from S. Balasubramaniam.
Qualification & Occupation	:	S.S.L.C. Employed in the All India Radio as staff artiste.
Debut	:	At Chenna Malleswarar Temple, Madras on August 15, 1957.

Shyamala Venkateswaran has been giving concerts at the Music Academy, sabhas and other institutions in India. Her concerts are well received.

Concert tours	:	Mauritius 1986
Cassette recordings	:	with Sulochana Pattabiraman. One individually.

She has won prizes for proficiency from the Tamil Isai Sangam, Indian Fine Arts Society and Sadguru Samajam, Purasawakkam. She is 'A' grade artiste with All India Radio.

\* \* \*

**SIMHA BHUPALA II - POET-COMPOSER/MUSICOLOGIST: (1330-1390)**

Simha Bhupala was a ruler of the Rayacharla ( Racherla ) Dynasty with his capital at Rajaçala or Racherla.

Ancestors	:	Daacaya Nayaka - Pocamamba
Parents	:	Anapola or Ananta - Annamamba

He has authored '*Kuvalayavali*', a drama in sanskrit and '*Rasarnavasudhakara*' composed in 1375 A.D. The latter work has seven chapters explaining sruti, swara, tana murchanas, compositions, talas, instruments and nartana. An excellent treatise in sanskrit on dramaturgy, he follows Bharata's *Natya sastra*. T. Venkatacharya says that there was a suggestion that the work had been actually written by Visweswara, author of '*Camatkara Chandrika*' and fathered on his patron, Simha Bhupala but that it is not correct. V.V. Narasimhacharya says that the author had noticed the changes that have set in music since the days of Sarngadeva. Catura Kallinadha's commentary on *Sangita Ratnakara* titled '*Kalanidhi*' came half a century later.

Bhupala called himself 'Sahitya Kala Abhijna' and was called 'Sarvajna'.

\* \* \*

**GHANAM SINNAYYA - COMPOSER:****(18th Century)**

Sinnayya was son of Venkataraghava Advani and Tiruvangalamma,

born at Chettipatnam in North Arcot district,  
brother of Sesha Yejwa,  
disciple of Varada Desika,  
a scholar in sanskrit and telugu,  
an eminent musician and  
a profound composer.

He was minister to Vijayaranga Chockanatha Naik, Madurai (1701 - 1732). It is significant to note that he was the earliest ghana vidwan to be followed by Bobbili Kesavayya, Krishna Ayyar, Paidala Gurumurti Sastri and Gururayacharyulu. Sinnayya has authored '*Sasana Vijayam*' full of sringara rasa. '*Ramanuja Charitram*' is a prabhandam of his and the popular song *Siva diksha paru ralanura*' (*Kurinji*) is his immortal piece in wide currency.

Titles & Honours : Bhooloka Narada  
Sarasa Vidya Visarada  
Kavi Gramani and  
Gayaka Ratna.

His signature was 'Mannaruranga'. (There was another of the same name, called Tsoukam Sinnayya, a tamil vidwan of the period of Sarabhoji II and Shivaji II.)

\* \* \*

**KOTTAIYUR SIVAKOZHUNDU DESIKHAR - COMPOSER :****(19th Century I half)**

Nativity : Kottaiyur in Tanjore district.  
Father : Dandapani Desikhar.

Sivakozhundu Desikhar was Asthana Vidwan in the Court of the celebrated Sarabhoji Raja II (1798 - 1832). He composed the '*Sarabhendra Bhupala Kuravanji*' comprising 39 kirtanas besides others. His *Kottaiyur Ula* is not traceable. Ponniah Pillai of the celebrated Tanjore Quartette set to music Desikhar's Kuravanji and it was enacted first at the temple of Sri Brihadeeswara, Tanjore by the Tanjore Quartette.

\* \* \*

**CITRAKAVI SIVARAMA BHAGAVATAR - MUSICAL DISCOURSER &****COMPOSER: (1869 - April 10, 1951)**

Parents : Mahadeva Rao and Parvati.

Learnt music under his father and tamil from Shanmugham Pillai and Ayyaswami Ayyar. A *mahratta* by birth, he learnt telugu and tamil and evinced

keen interest in musical discourses. Composed songs and nirupanams for musical discourses and they have been adopted by many artistes. For the benefit of Tanjore Abraham Pandithar of '*Karnamrutha Sagara Thirattu*', he composed nirupanams with stories from the Bible and for the Tiruvaduthurai Mutt, he composed nirupanams on Kumaragurupara Swamigal. Though the famous Lavani Venkata Rao trained him in lavani, Bhagavatar's heart was set on musical discourse only.

A teacher in music and mahrathi at the Mahratta School, Tanjore, he was a true patriot and composed national songs in sanskrit, english, telugu, tamil, and kannada. The manuscripts are reportedly with B.M. Sundaram. Banni Bai and Panduranga Rao were his disciples. He was honoured in 1916 at a special convention called for the purpose.

\* \* \*

### **'IRUVAIYARU SIVARAMAKRISHNA AYYAR - VIOLINIST:**

**(20th Century I half)**

Son of Subbarama Bhagavatar, a disciple of Tyagaraja, Sivaramakrishna ayyar has the distinction of adding "many of the chitta swaras to Tyagaraja's kirtans". He is described as *non pareil* in swara gnana. He specialised in authentic rendition of the kirtans ensuring syllabic purity. Blind artiste Tiruvadi Krishna Ayyar was among his disciples. Soolamangalam Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar pays glowing tributes to the expertise of Sivaramakrishna Ayyar.

\* \* \*

### **P. SIVAVADIVELU PILLAI -HYMNODIST MRIDANGIST: (b.July 2, 1916)**

Place of birth :	Pulivalam near Tiruvarur.
Parents	P. Pavadai Pillai & Sundarambal.
Training in mridangam	Ramadas Rao, Lecturer in Mridangam, Annamalai University.
In Pann Isai	Tiruppamburam Sivasubramania Pillai, Mailam Vajravel Mudaliar & M.M. Dandapani Desikhar.
Musical service :	Secretary, Muthu Thandavar Vizha, Chidambaram. Suddha Sanmarga Sangham, Mayiladuthurai.

Sivavadivelu Pillai was a freedom fighter and a 'Sangeetha Bhushanam' of Annamalai University. He has been honoured with the title of 'Mridanga Nadhani' by Kovai Isai Mandram. He has been doing service in temples as a hymnodist and is well spoken of.

\* \* \*

## **RAJAH BHOOLOKA MALLA SOMESWARA - MUSICOLOGIST : (1116-1138 A.D)**

Someswara was the son of Vikramaditya of the Western Chalukya Dynasty with capital at Kalyani. An authority on music, he wrote the thesaurus '*Manasollasa*' or *Abhilashitartha Chintamani* in 1130 A.D. for enlightening and teaching the world. He refers to music conferences.

' The efforts of Someswara paved the way for  
Sarngadeva, etc., to compose such encyclopaedic works. '

— Gowri Kuppuswami & M.Hariharan.

*Manasollasa* contains 8022 verses including chapters on Gitam (537 slokas) Vadyam (411 slokas), Nrityam (457 slokas) and musical discourse (27 slokas). The encyclopaedic work is a book of reference. The term 'Carnatic music' is traced to this work for its origin.

\* \* \*

## **S. SOWMYA - VOCALIST: (b. 1968)**

She is studying at the IIT, Madras on a scholarship and she had held a cultural talent scholarship for eight years. Scholarships and prizes, she has been awarded most of them. Has a sweet voice, imaginative musical rendition. Her concerts ' reveal finished quality in preparation and performance skill in handling gamakas '. It is Sowmya, an upcoming artiste popular with the audience. She is a disciple of the late Dr. S. Ramanathan. She had given voice support to him and to T. Muktha.

\* \* \*

## **V. SRIKANTA AYYAR - VEENA ARTISTE & PEDAGOGUE: (b.1920)**

Born at	:	Nanjangud in Karnataka.
of	:	Venkatanarayana Ayyar and Ranganayaki Ammal.
Musical training under	:	Maternal grandfather Veena Seshanna
Posts held	:	Lecturer in Veena, Bangalore University. Artiste, Akashvani.

Born in a musical family, he had the benefit of his elder brother Narayana Ayyar being a vainika. Srikanta Ayyar is a talented artiste; his meetu is soft and soothing and swara exposition elegant. Had played together with R.K. Venkatarama Sastri as duo.

\* \* \*

**K. SRINIVASA AYYANGAR - VEENA ARTISTE:****(1919 - 1979)**

An offspring of a musical family, Srinivasa Ayyangar initially took to flute under H.V. Venkataramayya but discontinued. After his Intermediate Examination, he passed Law at Bombay and became a Vakil in 1940. His musical inclinations were intact and kept in cold storage. They melted when his talented wife came forth to teach and train her spouse in veena. This led the couple to give joint concerts in veena like Sivanandham (a descendant of the Tanjore Quartette) and his wife.

Srinivasa Ayyangar was a critic and author of articles in the magazines *Gayana Ganga* and *Thai Nadu* (kannada) under the pen-name 'Raja Sri' combining the first syllables of the names of his wife Rajalakshmi and his own. He served the Bangalore Gayana Samaj for twenty-two years, founded the Kalyani Gana Nilayam and organised festivals to celebrate Tyagaraja and Purandara jayantis. Was Member, State Sangit Nataka Academy too. Has written the biographies of musicians and translated the Akademy publication on Muthuswamy Dikshitar. Had given numerous concerts.

**Titles:**

Veenavadana Vimarsana,  
Vainika Praveena,  
Sangita Vimarsana Praveena.

\* \* \* \* \*

**REALM OF MELODY**

The two books, *A Garland* and *Another Garland* together cover over —  
a thousand artistes,  
ten thousand accompanists, sub-artistes, patrons, etc.  
a lakh of dependents and  
a million music - lovers and admirers.

\* \* \*

**TRIBUTE TO SARNGADEVA :**

'Deva appears to have been a practical musician as well as a great scholar and an elegant poet; for the whole book (*Sangita Ratnakara*) consists of masterly couplets in the melodious metre called Arya... **This book alone would enable me to compose a treatise on the Music of India.**

— Sir William Jones, Founder-President, Asiatic Society, Calcutta.

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**M.J. SRINIVASA AYYANGAR - VEENA ARTISTE:****(b.1924)**

A genuine flower with distilled fragrance and a gem of purest ray serene born to blush unseen is Veena maestro Mysore Janardhana Ayyangar Srinivasa Ayyangar popularly known as MJS, writes G.T. Narayana Rao of Ganabharathi, Mysore. Father Janardhana Ayyangar (1885 - 1962) was a vainika and a disciple of Chikka Subbaraya. He was not able to pursue the professional line since his landed interests would not release him from their clutches. Srinivasa Ayyangar was initiated to vocal but as his voice cracked at the age of eight, he took to veena and in 1939 came under the care of Veena Venkatagiriappa at Mysore. Srinivasa Ayyangar states that his guru ' was an institution, a great vainika, a generous host and a professional guru in the palace '. (*Vide 'A Garland' for an account of Venkatagiriappa.*)

Srinivasa Ayyangar alludes to the manner of training he had thus :

' There was no question of our guru instructing anyone of us individually. By constantly attending to him, watching him playing veena, imbibing the technique and spirit and later feverishly practising them at home until I was anywhere near the periphery of the master's vast empire... '

Renowned artistes like Prof. R.N. Doreswamy, V. Doreswamy and V. Desikachar were some of the trainees with him. MJS was influenced by the styles of vocal maestros Ariyakudi, GNB and Alathur in shaping his style to be as close as possible to vocal rendition clearly delineating the course of the sahitya. Among his disciples figure A.S. Padma, M.K. Saraswati and M.K. Jayasri Prasad.

\* \* \*

**KANCHIPURAM P.B. SRINIVASACHARIAR - MUSICIAN: (20th Century)**

A Graduate in Arts of the Madras University, Srinivasachariar was a teacher in the National Brahma Gnana College, Adyar and was devoted to the propagation of Classical music. He published the book '*Sangita Sarvartha Chintaman*' containing fifteen varnas and kirtanas of eminent composers.

\* \* \*

**NERUR SRINIVASACHARIAR - MUSICIAN - COMPOSER: (1890 -1950)**

Nerur is the place sanctified by the immortality of Sadasiva Brahmendral; and Srinivasachariar hailed from that village. A disciple of Namakkal Narasimha Ayyangar, he was a vocalist-cum-violinist. He has composed in tamil (and some in sanskrit and telugu) gitams, swarajatis, varnams, kritis, padams, tillanas and javalis. Perhaps he was the first to compose in tamil Pancharatnas, Navaratri Kirtanas, Navagraha Kirtanas and songs on ' Nature '. His songs have been praised by distinguished men.

Some of his compositions were published in 1943 under the title '*Sri Ranga Gana Sudhadayam*' with an introduction by the eminent musicologist T.V. Subba Rao. Srinivasachariar has also set to tune slokas of the revered Sri Vedanta Desikha in '*Sankalpa Suryodayam*', etc. Keertanacharya C.R. Srinivasa Iyengar wrote on 27th December, 1931, 'in point of range and depth, he occupies the very first place... Verily a large bid for recognition and appreciation'. He taught music at the Lady Wellington Training College, Madras. Mysore Palace vidwans Sharma Brothers were among his disciples.

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### **TEREZHANDUR T.V. SRINIVASACHARI - VOCALIST: (b. January 14,1914)**

Parentage	:	Venkatachariar & Shenbagavalli.
Education & Training : in Music		Trichy National College High School - General studies Got Sangeetha Bhushanam diploma from the Annamalai University in 1933, with Sabhesa Ayyar and Ponniiah Pillai being his distinguished professors.

#### **Posts held :**

Music Teacher, Sri Ramakrishna High School, T. Nagar.	(1938-1942)
Headmaster, Tamilisai School, Devakottai	(1942-1947)
Teacher in Music, Oriental Sanskrit School, West Mambalam, Madras.	

#### **Titles & Honours :**

Tamil Veda Gana Sikhamani with Gold Medal by V.V. Srinivasa Ayyangar  
at Devakottai

Honoured by Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar  
Sangita Ratnakara by Mysore Parakala Mutt Jeer  
Isaikadal by Karaikudi Tamilisai Sangham in 1990.  
Honoured by the Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar Trust in 1991.

A born teacher with a rich repertoire of songs in tamil, Srinivasachari has set tunes to Kamba Ramayana verses, etc. and has given a concert of those songs alone before a distinguished gathering comprising Rajendra Prasad, Rajaji, Kalki and T.K.Chidambaranatha Mudaliar. He is the guiding spirit behind the activities of Sri Sat Guru Samajam, Purasawakkam, Sai Samaj, Mylapore, Terezhandur Veda Sabha and Sri Ramanjaneya Temple Committee, Tambaram Sanatorium. The great occasion in his life was the opportunity to give a concert with Pudukottai Narayanaswami on violin, Karaikudi Muthu Ayyar on mridangam and Devakottai Sundararaja Ayyangar on kanjira for the Sashtiabthapoorti of the great maestro, Mazhavarayanendal Subbarama Bhagavatar.

\* \* \*



**TIRUMALAI SRINIVASACHARIAR - VOCALIST:****(b.1920)**

Place of birth : Gowribidanur in Kolar district.

Father : Srinivasachariar

Tirumalai revealed musical instincts in abundance even as a boy and learnt much by hearing gramophone records. Joined the Sanskrit College, Bangalore. Had his musical lessons at the L.N. Narayanaswamy Gurukula for twelve years.

When he started on his professional concerts, he was taken as the Asthana Vidwan by the Gadwal Court in 1946. Later he joined in 1953 Chowdiah's Ayyanar College, Bangalore. He was also with the institution Vijaya Sangeetha of Narayanaswamy Bhagavatar.

\* \* \*

**R.K. SRINIVASAMURTY - VAINIKA:****(20th Cent.)**

Started with vocal music but switched over to veena, the special favourite of many Karnataka musicians. Srinivasamurty had his training under his father R.K. Keshavamurty and brother R.K. Suryanarayanan.

Title: Bharata Vainika Ratna by Parthasarathy Gana Sabha.

\* \* \*

**Prof. R. SRINIVASAN - MUSICOLOGIST:****(Sept. 21, 1887 - May 2, 1975)**

Born at musical Lalgudi amidst its melody-soaked fields, groves and gardens, Prof. R. Srinivasan had a distinguished academic career:

- M.A. having taken the first rank in the University both in B.A. and in M.A. ;
- had worked as Assistant Professor for a short period even while studying; and
- was Professor, Head of Department of Mathematics during 1925- 1937 and
- Principal, Science College, Trivandrum during 1937-38 and 1941-42.

Son of Ramanujam who was attached to the famous Srirangam shrine and Valambal, Srinivasan was not a mere Professor in Mathematics but was a multi-faceted man of learning and culture, actor, playwright, story-teller, poet and musician. While his teaching career spanned 1910–1942, music was his permanent and favourite field of expertise and endeavours. He gave harikathas, organised festivals and conferences and took a prominent part in founding the Swati Tirunal Academy and Sabha at Trivandrum.

He had contributed many articles on music, had composed the plays ' Meerabai ' and ' Susheela ' and authored the work ' *Facets of Indian Culture* '.

Srinivasan's varied interests are reflected in the posts he had held —

First Scout Commissioner, Travancore State  
 Honorary Director, Travancore Radio Station  
 Chairman / Member of Committees of South Indian Universities on Mathematics and  
 Fine Arts.

Member, Central Advisory Committee for Music  
 Adviser to the Government of Ceylon on programmes for Radio Ceylon  
 Member, Experts Committee of the Music Academy, Madras / Trivandrum and  
 was connected with Kalakshetra, Madras.

A theosophist, he was the fulcrum and focus of musical activities at Trivandrum. His primary interest centred round the three 'M's - Music, Mathematics and Mysticism. Plato insisted on a knowledge of mathematics and music for admission to his school; Prof. Srinivasan is an instance of Plato's type of scholar.

\* \* \*

### **T.R. SRINIVASAN - MRIDANGIST:**

**(b.1928)**

Parents: D. Rangachariar and Kalaimamani Tanjore Andalammal,  
 a bharata natyam artiste.

T.R. Srinivasan had his training under Kuttalam S. Sivavadivel Pillai from the age of twelve under gurukulavasa. In 1945, he made his debut at Tanjore as accompanist to his sisters Lakshmi and Gowri. Had further advanced training under Palani Subramania Pillai. He has provided accompaniment to senior vidwans like Chittoor Subramania Pillai, T.R. Mahalingam, Madurai Mani Ayyar and Madurai Somu. Has provided percussion accompaniment to prominent danseuses. Was appointed as Lecturer in the Government Music College in 1972. He had demonstrated special features in percussion. Was honoured with the title of ' Kalaimamani ' by the Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram (1984). Has trained quite a large number of disciples.

\* \* \*

### **A. SRINIVASARAGHAVAN - VOCALIST:**

**(b. 1929)**

A. Srinivasaraghavan is a Bachelor of Commerce who had his initial training in music with Kumbakonam Souri Ayyangar, a disciple of Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar. When he joined the Annamalai University, he had music with mathematics (Plato formula) and physics for Part III. He became an ardent disciple of G.N. Balasubramaniam later and was with him till G.N.B. left for Trivandrum to join Sri Swati Tirunal Academy of Music. Srinivasaraghavan has been giving concerts at important sabhas in India. His first concert at the Music Academy was in 1961 and in that year got the T.V. Subba Rao Memorial Prize for junior vocalists. He mentions that he had given a concert before the former President, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan at the Rashtrapathi Bhavan. He enjoys a free style.

**SRIPADARAYA - COMPOSER:****(13th Century)**

One of the senior Haridasas of Karnataka and perhaps the foremost among them, Sripadaraya had left compositions which are in chaste and lucid language for easy assimilation by the lay public. It is stated that only some of his padas have been retrieved. 'Raghupati' is his signature. Narahari Tirtha who started the Dasakoota line of devotees was his disciple. Sripadaraya is one of the senior Haridasas of Karnataka, and perhaps the foremost among them.

Sripadaraya's period is also mentioned around 1500 A.D.

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**SRIRAM PARASURAM - VIOLINIST :****(b.1965)**

Perhaps the 'Parasuram Quintet' is unique in presenting a family ensemble comprising —

Parvati Parasuram,	the mother and vocalist and her children
Sriram	on violin,
Vishwanath	on mridangam,
Narayan	on ghatam and
Meenakshi	as vocal.

A Bachelor of Engineering (Mechanical) and an M.B.A., Sriram is also a Master of Music-Violin Performance of the School of Music, University of Akron, Ohio. He is now pursuing Ethnomusicology at the Wesleyan University. The finer and noteworthy aspect of his career is that Sriram with his professional qualifications has taken to music as a profession contrary to the prevailing practice, where music is ancillary or incidental to one's profession. While doing a statutory stint at Citibank for his MBA, he took the conscious decision -

'It just was not what I wanted to spend my time on. In any case I would have to quit a bank job within the first few years. To study music at the academic level was my own conscious and personal decision. I wanted a new dimension to my art.'

**Training :**

Violin under Ramakrishna Sarma  
Vocal and Violin under K.S. Narayanaswamy and V. Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar.  
Hindustani music under Pandit C.R. Vyas.

Having made his debut at the age of eight, Sriram has so far given over eight hundred solo recitals in India and abroad worthy of a Bradman and Dennis Compton in cricket. He has been providing accompaniment to distinguished musicians also. He enjoys the distinction of 'A' grade both in Carnatic and Hindustani systems with All India Radio. His recitals have been extensively covered by the media and commended for soothing tuneful music and for the modulation, rhythm and beauty of his play. His vocal training has given him the

The academic exposure at Akron is claimed to have taught him a new way of movement in handling the violin and analytical finesse. Dr. Sulochana Rajendran, Editor, 'Shanmukha' writes:

'His play was reposeful Carnatic music, a composite melodic essay, each of the phases like alapana, kriti and kalpanaswaras filling in its lot with a subtlety, a freshness of approach and of articulation.'

### Awards :

President of India Gold Medal.	1981
'Young Musician' title from Music Academy, Madras.	1983
'Surmani' by Sur-Singar Samsad, Bombay.	
Ustad Amir Khan Memorial Award by Kala Sangam, Calcutta.	

Album recordings:

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**MADURAI SRIRANGAM AYYANGAR** (of MADURAI BROS.) - VOCALIST:  
(1904 -)

One of the erstwhile senior vidwans in the traditional style, Srirangam Ayyangar was an accomplished master in rare ragas and pallavi. The former Chief Justice of Madras, M. Anantanarayanan wrote:

"His mastery of sruti, laya and swara had a depth, an assurance and a rich and vibrant voice which were compelling... It was impossible not to be deeply impressed; musical imagination of that quality is rare... A mere grammar of music does not suffice to distinguish *Durbar* and *Nayaki*. To my delight, the vidwan sang the little known *Durbar* kriti '*Endundi Vedalithivo*' with swara prastara and immediately sang pallavi in *Nayaki*. The contours were utterly different.'

Note : The confusion or the subtle distinction between *Durbar* and *Nayaki* has been availed of by Tyagarajah in the song *Endundi Vedalithivo* as he avers, 'I am at a loss to guess even your nativity and whence you have come'. Just as the listener wants to know whether it is *Durbar* or *Nayaki* the musician is handling, Tyagaraja too asks, 'Pray, let me know it at least now'. The aptness of the raga for a song which raises many doubts is to be noted.'

Born in 1904 at Madurai as the third son of Rangaswami Ayyangar and Lakshmi Ammal, Srirangam Ayyangar underwent regular gurukulavasa under the renowned musician Namakkal Pallavi Narasimha Ayyangar. Made his debut at the age of fourteen at the Srirangam temple. Had a three-decade long successful career giving concerts with his brother Srinivasa Ayyangar as 'Madurai Brothers'. The Shatkala Pallavi he rendered at Kalakshetra with Mani Ayyar is recorded as a 'remarkable feat'. (NRB). On the demise of his brother he gave up concerts and was giving tuitions only. R. Vedavalli, who had her training under him at Mannargudi, pays a rich tribute to him and says, — 'He would come in a self-driven single bullock-cart... he took me as a disciple. Certainly he did it not for money. He was a great man... When I think of him I experience spiritual exhilaration. He would not like lessons to be reduced to writing. All was oral.'

**Honours and titles:**

Tamil Nadu Sangita Nataka Sangham Award	
Central Sangit Natak Akademy Award,	1966.
Sangita Kalanidhi by Music Academy, Madras in	1969.

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**K. SRIVATSA - MRIDANGIST:****(b.August 18, 1948)**

Parents	:	R. Krishnan & Saraswati
Training in mridangam	:	Under Palani Subramania Pillai and P.A. Venkataraman (1960-1972)
General qualification	:	S.S.L.C.
Debut	:	Accompanied Sangita Kalanidhi Alathur Srinivasa Ayyar on 22 09 1966 at Tiruchirapalli.
Post held	:	A.I.R. Staff Artiste since 1984.
Disc recordings	:	Accompanied M. Chandrasekharan and B. Rajam Ayyar on kanjeera.

Has been providing competent accompaniment to prominent artistes.

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**BAKSHI SUBBANNA - FRAGRANT VEENA VIDWAN:****(1855 - 1938)**

Subbanna, a contemporary of Seshanna, adorned the Mysore Durbar galaxy of musicians. 'He was a more substantial and serious-minded exponent of the veena. But he was an introvert lacking in push and enterprise, though he enjoyed the respect and esteem of the better-informed', wrote R. Rangaramanuja Ayyangar.

Mysore Vasudevacharya writes that Subbanna's generosity was extravagant. (The account of his liberal extravagance and inability to say 'No' leaves one to thank God that Subbanna was fortunately born a male!) He was born rich and lived like a benevolent, cultured prince.

'A Gandharva elegant in taste and always cheerful. He was quite frugal in eating while luxurious dishes were all reserved for his guests! Smartly dressed, he was extremely fond of flowers and scents. When he moved out, his approach would be announced a furlong ahead by the fragrance wafted across by breeze !'

Gopalakrishna Bharati would leave his remuneration with his patrons as deposits and, though wretchedly poor himself, used to issue cheques on palmyrah leaves to those in need to take such deposits from the patron-banks. Even so, when Subbanna was in his last days in distress, he would give a note to take his own stipend from the Durbar Bakshi ! Surely he was a modern Karna ! How ? Here Vasudevacharya confirms:

' Even when his fortune dwindled away and life became hard, Subbanna continued to be generous. One of his dependents had been promised financial assistance for a marriage in his house. Subbanna had none left with him. He called his wife Namagiriamma to hand over the gold belt (*oddiyanam*) she was wearing. The gracious wife swiftly complied with it. '

If Karna parted with his life-saving breast plate, Subbanna couple parted with the gold belt that was left with them! The ambrosial aspect of this episode lies in that the honourable couple were made for each other and their lives exemplify the concept of *Ardhanarishwara* each half finding rhythm in the other. And when Vasudevacharya dedicated his kirtana *Rarajeevalochana Rama (Mohanam)* to Subbanna who brought him up, the noble Kannadiga gave vent to a gospel truth:

' Acharya! It is my misfortune that I am listening to this kirtana when my hands are empty. It is good in a way, I should say. If creative art is to blossom forth into a lovely flower, may be, the artist should go hungry. '

" This man is freed from servile bands  
Of hope to rise or fear to fall;  
Lord of himself, though not of lands;  
And having nothing, yet hath all. "

— Sir Henry Wotton.

Chamaraja Wodeyar, the ruler of Mysore used to take Mysore Vasudevacharya and Subbanna to his camps. Once the two vidwans were allotted a small, inconvenient tent by officials and their protests went unheeded. Taking it as a challenge, Vasudeva gave a thick coat of sandal paste on Subbanna's forehead and covering themselves with shawls both met the ruler pretending to be ill. To the royal query, Vasudeva replied that damp conditions in the tent had led to their illness and 'caused concern not so much for themselves but for their musical instruments !' Immediate royal concern and solicitude for their health were revealed in their being provided with fresh tent, cots and other comforts. Once in the Nilgiris, Subbanna fell very sick. The Maharaja himself took up the nursing and persuaded Subbanna to take porridge saying, 'Subbu, You must not starve like this. You must drink this. It acts like a soft cushion to the starved stomach...' Subbanna took it, but suddenly vomited spilling it on the ruler himself. Gently wiping it off, Chamaraja said, 'Call me if Subbu refuses to drink the porridge.' Royal concern was so affectionately personal, intense and transcendental. Chamaraja reminds us the ancient episode of a poet taking rest on the royal couch and entering on deep slumber. The king returns and finding the poet sleeping fans him lest his sleep should be hindered. Such deeds elevate human thoughts and actions without doubt!

Subbanna was an actor too. 'Usually he acted as hero. No one would believe that the actor was Subbanna. Such was his grace and perfection ! Shamanna and Viraraghava Ayyangar did the female roles. "I doubt if Henry Irving known for his perfection to depict Shakespeare's Iago could do as well as Subbanna did in the Indian version of Othello – Surasena", remarked Prof. Fraser, tutor to Krishnaraja Wodeyar. Bidaram Krishnappa acted as

Dushtabuddhi and fisherman. Unique and sublime indeed was the cultural atmosphere at Mysore then. 'Only after the Maharaja was fully satisfied during rehearsal, a drama was allowed to be enacted before the public.'

(Source: K. Vasudevacharya.)

\* \* \*

### MOOGURU SUBBANNA - VOCALIST:

(19th century)

Mooguru is the village in T. Narasapur taluk where Subbanna, a contemporary of Mysore Sadasiva Rao was born. His voice was gruff and harsh initially but with determination, yogabhyasa and sadhaka, his voice attained acceptability... Clearly, he was a kannada counterpart of Konerirajapuram Vaidyanatha Ayyar in this respect. Veena Shamanna and Andalanoor Subbiah were his gurus - the latter being credited with the preparation of written notation for Kshetragna padas. Subbanna was giving a large number of concerts, composed swarajatis, varnas and kirtanas. Mysore Vasudevacharya writes that Subbanna had done a lasting service to music and that even renowned Veena Seshanna and Subbarayaru had gone to Subbanna for learning his compositions and for discussions. Subbarayaru called him, a *Mahavidwan* and an *Ajatashatru*. Subbanna made it a point to go to the famous sahitya vidwan, Garalapuri Sastry of Sosale for getting the correct significance of sahitya.

Subbanna sang with *rasabhava* and his music had 'a divine appeal'. His unflinching humility and deep devotion to music were famous. He was affectionate to children calling them Devaru and Siva. He always kept two tamburas tuned up fifteen minutes in advance for concerts like Bikshandarkoil Subbarayar. He was particular about the audience maintaining silence at concerts like Gottuvadyam Sakharama Rao. Poverty did not wither his amiability or shake his faith in *Nadopasana* since Tyagaraja has said that Sankara, Narayana and Brahma had attained their distinctive glory only through it. (*Nadopasanache - Begada raga*.)

\* \* \*

### SRIVANJAM SUBBARAMA AYYAR - VOCALIST:

(20th Century)

A musician dedicated to *Nadopasana*, Subbarama Ayyar found his musical expertise and talents useful to pursue his spiritual endeavours. A strange incident confirmed his conviction and resolve to direct his music to devotion. He used to take his ablutions in the adjacent river Mudicondan at pre - dawn daily, as usual with all villagers till a decade back and wash his clothes by thrashing them on the granite slab kept for the purpose, again as is usual in villages. One day, he thought that he got a command with the word '*Thiruppu*' (turn), as he was waking up. He could not understand it. After his ablutions, haunted by the word '*Thiruppu*', quite by a flash of thought and impulse, he turned the granite

he and others had used for years. Lo ! it was the idol of Lord Vinayaka Himself; and Ayyar and others had thrashed on His back so long and stood over it for years! Overcome by remorse over the sacrilege, he constructed a temple for it and it is now the 'Therku Veedhi Pillayar' in the village. Ayyar had been honoured by many for his chaste music. And Vinayaka had ignored the violent deeds as innocent and childish!

He composed kirtans, padams and varnams and his sons Subbarayar, Mangaleswaran and Ganapati were all musicians. The last was guru to Tiruvidaimarudur Bhavani, then a famous lady artiste. Mangaleswaran's descendants were Vaidyanatha Ayyar, pioneering author of 'Book-Keeping and Accounts' text book, V. Sundaram Ayyar of Mylapore and Rajam - Balachander Brothers.

\* \* \*

#### **D. SUBBARAMAYYA - MUSICOLOGIST:**

**(b.1904)**

Place of birth	:	Patagonahalli, Tumkur district.
Father	:	Danappa
Preceptor in music	:	Puttappa, violinist-uncle.
Debut	:	Thirteenth year
Post held	:	Lecturer at Ram Mandira, Mysore. (Institution founded by Bidaram Krishnappa) 1940
Institution founded	:	College of Carnatic Music, Bangalore in 1937
Honour conferred	:	Sangeet Natak Academy (Karnataka) Award 1963.

An erudite scholar noted for his absorbing and enlightened lectures.

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#### **A. SUBBA RAO - VOCALIST:**

**(b.1923)**

Place of birth	:	Mysore.
Parents	:	Anantarama Rao and Saradamma.
Musical training under	:	Bidaram Krishnappa, Lakshmidas Rao, Chikka Rama Rao.
Qualification	:	Intermediate (Collegiate)

Institutions founded or associated with:

Gana Kala Bharati - founded by him.  
 Gana Kala Parishat - General Secretary.  
 State Sangit Natak Academy - President.  
 Member, Bangalore University Senate.

#### **Titles & Honours :**

Gana Sudhakara	By the Pontif of Sosula Math
Gana Kala Tilaka	in 1972
Gana Kala Bhushana	in 1980



The Government of Karnataka honoured A. Subba Rao in 1981. His style of rendition is traditional and pleasing. Is endowed with a melodious voice. He has played a prominent part in musical endeavours in Karnataka.

\* \* \*

**B. SUBBA RAO - MUSICOLOGIST: (1894 - 1975)**

Place of birth : Basavapatnam, Hassan district.

B. Subba Rao started his training in music in his sixth year under his brother and brother-in-law. At Nagpur, where he entered service later as an assistant in the Agricultural Department, he not only enhanced his vidwat in Carnatic music but learnt Hindustani music. Was a Member of the Karnataka State Sangit Natak Academy.

Subba Rao was giving numerous lectures and presenting articles on music. '*Raga Nidhi*', a valuable contribution of his, has been published in four volumes by the Music Academy, Madras. He invented the instrument 'Chitravati' which could be played as a veena or as a gottuvadyam.

Title: Uthama Gayana Visaradha by the Ruler of Mysore.

\* \* \*

**RATNAGIRI SUBBA SASTRI - VIOLINIST: (b. 1909)**

Place of birth: Ratnagiri in Tumkur district.

Father: Nageswara Sastri, violinist.

Subba Sastri had his lessons under his father and attended the Sanskrit Patasala, Mysore in 1927. In 1930 he switched over to the use of the seven-stringed violin under the guidance of Vennai Raja Rao. He was a teacher from 1939 at the Mahila Seva Sanga High School, Bangalore. As an accompanist, he brought forth his rich talents and satisfying presentation.

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**SUBBURAYASWAMI - KILI KANNI ORIGINATOR:**

A trend-setter, Subburayaswami belonged to Ambasamudram on the bank of River Tambaraparni (extolled by Muthuswami Dikshitar in his *Sri Kanthimathim* in raga *Desi Simharava* as '*suddha Tambraparni tatasthitam*' - Sri Kanthimathi who has taken up her abode on the bank of Tambraparni river with its crystal clear waters). Was a head constable. He has composed 108 couplets called *kili kanni* addressed as songs of love from a lovelorn damsel. The songs were popular.

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**SUBHANKARA - MUSICOLOGIST:****(15th Century)**

Grandson of Narayana and son of Kavi Chakravarti Sridhara and Subhadra, Subhankara had four sons by names Devakinandana, Rajasekhara, Susena and Damodara. It is surmised that the first two and the second two sons might have been by different wives. Subhankara has authored '*Sangita Damodara*' besides another called *Muktavali*. He quotes *Sangita Ratnakara* and *Sangita Chudamani* and his work is quoted by others as an authority. The work *Sangita Damodara* contains five chapters dealing with music, dance, and drama. The work has been published by the Sanskrit College, Calcutta in 1960 with Gourinatha Sastri and another as editors. It is said that the work had not been well arranged by the author. It is a collection from ancient works cited by him. 'His attempt to explain music and dramaturgy as originating from Krishna is novel as others had attributed them only to Lord Shiva.' This may be due to his hailing from Bengal where Vaishnava influence predominated. Quite a lot of information is given like:

Bhavas giving rise	to enduring rasas number	9
	to fleeting rasas number	33 and
	to ennobling rasas number	8
Moods of lovers		12
Sakhis		3
Go-betweens		12
Nayakas		4 etc.

\* \* \*

**TIRUVENKADU Dr. SUBRAMANIA PILLAI - NAGASWARA MAESTRO:****(June 26, 1906 - )**

1934 at Chidambaram, the scene of Cosmic Dance. The deity was being taken in procession along the streets. The nagaswara vidwan went on giving thrilling rendition from 10 p.m. till dawn. S. Ramanathan states:

'Started with *mallari* in *Nattai*. Then a very elaborate alapana of *Kiravani* followed by thanam and pallavi which lasted for four hours. The pallavi included a ragamalika. Then came kritis...'

It was Subramania Pillai who was noted for his sweet rendition and was a popular vidwan. He had his training under Tiruvenkadu Samithurai Pillai. He is credited to be the first nagaswara vidwan to be conferred with a doctorate by the Tamil University - to be followed by Sheikh Chinna Moulana and Namagiripettai Krishnan. His period saw a galaxy of nagaswara stalwarts hailing from Tiruvaduthurai, Tiruvizhimalalai, Tiruvidaimarudur, etc.

Disc recordings :

Concert tour: Sri Lanka and Malaysia.

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**A. SUBRAMANIAM - VEENA ARTISTE:****(b. Decr. 4, 1913)**

Place of birth	:	Harikesanallur, Tirunelveli dt.
Parents	:	Violinist Appa Ayyar and Valliammal.
Musical training under	:	Father Appa Ayyar Prof. Gomati Sankara Ayyar of Annamalai University & Harikesanallur Gayakasikhamani L. Muthiah Bhagavatar.

Subramaniam has provided veena for background orchestral music with his brother Gottuvadyam A. Narayana Ayyar for the films 'Chintamani', etc. Was veena teacher at the Delhi Carnataka Sangita Sabha and Lecturer in Veena during 1964-1974 at the Benares Hindu University.

**Publications:**

- a. Geetha Prabhandamalai
- b. Apoorva kirtanas of Patnam Subramania Ayyar (1961) and
- c. 72 Melakartas of Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar (1964)

He had indexed two thousand kirtanas of many composers for Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram.

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**VALAYAPATTI A.R. SUBRAMANIAM - PERCUSSION MAESTRO: (b.1940)**

" Who among these will beat the drum ?  
How, if he beat it, will he beat ?

— cxxxii *Atharva Veda.*

Initially started training under his father Arumugham Pillai in nagaswaram and then switched over to tavil under his brother Palanivel. Making his debut at the age of sixteen, A.R. Subramaniam reached the top by 1964 with his exceptional talents. His remarkable fingering techniques and patterns and his ability to bring out intricate variations and subtle nuances in rhythm soon made him out as a laya maestro among the tavil vidwans of the last quarter of this century. He added new dimensions to tavil play by providing accompaniment to the solos of Kunnakudi Vaidyanathan, violinist and Mandolin Srinivas. Drawing inspiration from the all-time prodigy Palghat Mani Ayyar, Subramaniam is a creative collaborator in interpreting music through rhythm in tavil. He has had 3442 concerts upto 1990 - which is by any standard a colossal figure - a veritable Kapil Dev in percussion! He provides rhythm unruffled and his style of rendition is different from that of Needamangalam Meenakshisundaram and others of his style. Subramaniam's *forte* is pleasing sound and not strength and vibrancy. He is like the Krishnans in tennis and not the dynamos Courier or Ivanisevic.

## Titles & Honours:

Kalaimamani from the Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram  
 State Artiste, Tamil Nadu Government  
 Sangita Natak Academy Award  
 Isai Perarignar from the Tamil Isai Sangham, Madras 1990,  
 being the first tavildar to receive the honour.

Concert tours : Europe, USA in 1985

Disc recordings:

A.R. Subramaniam opines that double nagaswaram play had probably started during the days of Tiruppamburam Brothers and Tiruvizhimalalai Brothers about fifty to seventy years back (it should be older still) with the percussion genius Needamangalam Meenakshisundaram Pillai and Nachiarkoil Raghava Pillai presenting their exhilarating, competitive rendition. Jackwood from dry areas like Pudukottai, Panruti and Jaffna provide the best quality wood for tavil according to Subramaniam. He arranged for an experimental combination of bharata natyam with nagaswaram and tavil for music and rhythm calling it '*Nadamum Natyamum*' and presented it recently.

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### M.S. SUBRAMANIAM - PERCUSSIONIST:

(b.January 19, 1935)

Place of birth	:	Mayiladuthurai.
Training in	:	Tavil under grandfather Tillaiyadi A. Srinivasa Pillai,
Percussion under	:	Kuttalam Ramiah Pillai, Koorainadu P. Palanivel Pillai.
Mridangam under	:	Kuttalam Sivavadivel Pillai and Ramnad Murugabhoopati Pillai.
Kanjeera under	:	Pudukottai Swaminatha Pillai.
Debut	:	At the age of nine.

Has provided tavil to most of the eminent nagaswara artistes. Has accompanied on mridangam and kanjeera Madurai Somu (Somasundaram Pillai), T.M. Theagarajan, etc. Has been teacher in mridangam at the Government Music College (now Training Centre), Madras.

Concert tour : Europe 1964.

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### T.R. SUBRAMANYAM - VOCALIST & PEDAGOGUE :

(b.Sept.20, 1929)

Here is an account of T.R. Subramanyam by B.V.K. Sastry:

'He is a musician with a difference... He is one of the few musicians who received training in colleges and proved their mettle on the concert stage... He evaluates art from different angles... While he is popular with the *cognocenti* as an imaginative and innovative artiste, purists feel that he is unconventional if not unorthodox... In

one of the conferences in Bangalore years back, an idea was being tossed about - what would be the audience reaction if a concert is presented in the reverse? This implied instead of starting the concert with the customary varnam, salutation to Ganapati, etc., to start from the concluding Mangalam working way back to varnam. Finally to obviate a sort of shock to the purists, T.R.S. started with a penultimate item - javali. '

Son of Rajagopala Ayyar and Alamelu, T.R. Subramanyam was born at Tiruvidaimarudur, noted for its great temple and cultural environments. Bodhendra-Ayyaval meets used to take place here. Sakharama Rao, gottuvadyam maestro and P.S. Veeruswami Pillai, nagaswaram perfectionist were here. Semmangudi Dr. Srinivasa Ayyar, Veena Narayana Ayyangar and Gottuvadyam Narayana Ayyangar had their training here. The soil and waters of Tiruvidaimarudur are saturated with music. Rajagopala Ayyar was a sincere promoter of Madurai Mani Ayyar and C.S. Krishna Ayyar. As concerts then were not many, 'I had to listen to each and everyone lest my father should beat me!', says T.R.S. He had his general education at Mayuram, Tirunelveli and Vijayawada and is an M.A. (Lit.).

Musical training with :

Sivarama Ayyar of Mayuram, A.D. Rajagopala Ayyar of Tirunelveli,  
Gavai Sitarama Bhagavatar and D.S. Mani Bhagavatar of Perungulam.

He had his diploma from the Central College of Carnatic Music, Madras. On his training with the masters at the Central College, T.R.S. has many interesting episodes and opinions to give. Here are some:

'Many of the teachers and students did not then have general education and he was thus very much in demand to write even leave letters... Pallavi rendition in those days was taken as one that landed the artiste on the moon. In those days, the Government went to the artistes... Swaminatha Pillai of Tiruppamburam complained against me and frustrated, I left for Trivandrum but was brought back by Semmangudi Srinivasa Ayyar... I complained to the Principal on the inadequate teaching and non-completion of the syllabus. Musiri agreed to postpone the examination. Pallavi training was below mark... What I could do easily, the teachers then took a much longer time... I had no gurukulavasa and it has its advantages and disadvantages. '

'As there was dearth of artistes, the All India Radio was then hunting for musicians. My father took me to the AIR station and there he was humming, as I was having my audition. AIR forced him too to sing! We both sang! That was the paradox of the day! '

TRS holds fast to certain ideas and values, as for instance :

'There is now more search for applause.'

'Music is but one more source of occupation.'

'I am prepared to go anywhere if it is remunerative.'

'Youth seeks songs and not deep learning in music.'

'I went on storing music, though I was a salesman earlier.'

'Many are interested in projecting themselves rather than their learning.'  
 'They rarely understand that music is a subject of sounds and not of words.'  
 'Deterioration is clear when third rate people shout *Pancharatna* kritis at  
 Tiruvaiyaru.'

' His distinctive style of singing and his distinctive ideas on music have both  
 earned for him and his disciples the sobriquet of " Delhi Gharana" of Carnatic  
 music.'

— *Sruti*.

T.R. Subramanyam has composed varnas, etc.

### Honours & Titles:

Mahamahopadhyaya by the Akil Bharatiya Gandharva Mahavidyalaya Mandal.  
 Sangita Kalanidhi by the Kannada Koota, New York.  
 Sangita Choodamani.

### Posts held :

Lecturer, Central College of Carnatic Music, Madras.  
 Reader, Delhi University for about 26 years.  
 Hony Director, Gandharva Maha Vidyalyaya, New Delhi.

Prior to taking up the posts, he had been with prominent companies like Binnys and Estrella. This exposure to industrial and commercial bodies might have exercised its own influence on his distinct approach to men and matters.

There was a queer development during November-December 1991 in his career. His disciple Radha Venkatachalam is said to have submitted a thesis captioned 'Epoch Makers of the Recent Past in the field of Carnatic Music' to the Gandharva Maha Vidyalyaya containing copious 'comments sourced - if indirectly - to TRS... to slander numerous personalities connected with music'. The magazine '*Sruti*' in its issue no.86 brought out *in extenso* extracts taking objection to a prominent musician and musicologist playing such a regrettable part in the condemnable episode. It would appear that the Federation of Sabhas, Madras objected to the role of T.R. Subramanyam. Consequently his concerts scheduled for December 1991 at Madras did not take off though he was present in his usual sartorial perfection. In fact the first announcement was made by him! The music festival then current gave wide currency to the development. Subramaniam affirmed that he had the best of regards to most of the musicians derided in the thesis but that did not carry much weight:

**SUNDARAJA (PARVATI SRINIVASAN) - COMPOSER:****(Decr. 24, 1924 - Sept. 1989)**

By chance, the author stepped into Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Madras with the genial musician S. Rajam and it proved to be a pleasant, satisfying experience to hear the top T.V. Sankaranarayanan singing the compositions in chaste sanskrit and tamil of Sundaraja (Parvati Srinivasan) to the delight of the audience. The compositions were simple in diction, elegant in their thematic perception and appeal and measured in sahitya like those of Papanasam Sivan to provide the musician ample scope to bring out the soul of the song and the raga and the beauty and message of the sahitya. The notation has been embellished by Jayalakshmi Sundararajan, Nila Srinivasan, Charumati Ramachandran and V. Subramanian. The name 'Sundaraja' is a pious tribute to the father of the composer, Parvati Srinivasan.

Father:	N. Sundaram Ayyar of Ottapalem, Advocate, freedom fighter and Bhoodan donor. He was one of the earnest, dedicated followers of Vinobhaji and he donated his entire landed assets of 47 acres !
General Qualification:	B.A., B.Ed.,
Musical Training under:	Desamangalam Subramanya Bhagavatar and M.A. Kalyanakrishna Bhagavatar.
Publications:	'Gananjali' containing 52 songs fully notated.

A good veena player and a good writer, Sundaraja had a flair for social work and the trust started to honour her memory carries on the noble task.

\* \* \*

**SIMIZHI SUNDARAM AYYAR - A TRAGIC CASE OF GENIUS IGNORED:****(1884 - October 1927)**

'Simizhi Sundaram Ayyar is one of the eminent vidwans whom Fame failed to honour.'  
— Mudicondan Venkatarama Ayyar.

'An extraordinary genius of superb talents and scholarship. His very breath was music. With an alert mind and restless energy, he gathered the treasures of the Golden Age. He was a veritable encyclopaedia in rhythm and melody. His resource was amazing. His repertoire was colossal. His knowledge of tradition was profound. An *ekasan-dagrahi*, he was a typical votary of Carnatic music, dedicated, versatile, immersed in *Nadopasana*, indifferent to praise and blame, rooted in *vairagya*. His keen insight in sruti values that determined the individuality and melodic structure and swaras enabled him to visualise them as concrete bodies.'

— R. Rangaramanuja Ayyangar.

Sundaram Ayyar had a flair for research. Dame Luck turned not its attention on him but went after 'hidebound cranks with closed minds and cramped vision'. The repository of the Legacy of the Golden Age commanded respect and esteem among the knowledgeable but history could not make up its mind to give him the

appropriate recognition. If there was one most deserving during his period for Meritorious Recognition and Popularity, it was he. Yet he was praised but the world forgot to act further; he was a colossus in melody and wisdom but was left in the dust !

If Manambuchavadi Venkatasubba Ayyar had the credit of moulding the 'Pancha Ratnas' (five gems of eminent musicians), Simizhi had his disciple-gems in Mudicondan Venkatarama Ayyar, Tiruvarur Rajayee, Mayavaram Rajam, Flautist Rajarama Ayyar, Mayavaram Govindaraja Pillai and Harmonist S.S. Mani. Veena Balachander, Rangaramanuja Ayyangar and Papanasam Sivan were among the many who were inspired by him and it was he who gave the honorific 'Tamil Tyagaraja' to Papanasam Sivan. Was a tireless worker in productive endeavours and he never wasted time. Sundaram Ayyar had a grand personality. In contrast to his sober, calm, humble later years, he was called 'scorpion' while young. He was born in an ocean of melody. Brother K.V. Rajarama Ayyar was a flautist and another brother K.V. Venugopala Ayyar was a violinist. Times were not propitious then lest the brothers should have presented the world with the best of ensembles. The fault lay in Simizhi being an idealist; and idealism rarely enjoys rights to claim prosperity; and there was no local Krishna to befriend this Kuchela of Simizhi even belatedly. An expert in swaras, his rendition was classic. Sundaram Ayyar had his training under two stalwarts, viz., Ettayapuram Ramachandra Bhagavatar (who fathered the musical gifts of Marungapuri Gopala Krishna Ayyar, Melody-king Pushpavanam, the famous Dhanakoti Sisters, Puducheri Rangaswamy Ayyar and Sivasubramania Ayyar) and the eminent Ramaswami Sivan at Tiruvaiyaru during 1894-95. At the age of twelve, he made his debut at Sengalipuram near Kumbakonam officiating for B.A. Varadachariar who could not arrive. He took Mudicondan Venkatarama Ayyar voluntarily for training attracted by his musicianship and encouraged him. There is, indeed, an air of irony in their lives that both were idealists, experts, colossuses of learning and highly respected but were not helped to prosper materially!

\* \* \*

**B.M. SUNDARAM - MUSICOLOGIST:**

**(b.October 10, 1935)**

Son of the magnificent tavil vidwan, Needamangalam Meenakshishundaram Pillai, B.M. Sundaram is a musicologist. His legacy is vast in the art with deep and profound knowledge of men and matters. His articles are detailed and full on anecdotal information. His '*Monograph on Kancheepuram Naina Pillai*' bears ample evidence of this. He has availed of the immense potential of Saraswati Mahal Library, Tanjore. His works are '*Comparative Study of Karnatak and Hindustani Systems of Music*' and a compendium of over 3,000 raga-scales titled '*Palai Azhi*'. He has some more researched works to bring out, it is said. He is on the Staff of All India Radio, Pondicherry as Music Composer.



## MANNARGUDI SAMBASIVA BHAGAVATAR - HARIKATHA MAESTRO : (b. 1912)

The lad of thirteen studying at the Ramakrishna Mission Home, Mylapore, then a temple of spiritual culture, snubbed by the teacher for claiming to have composed the crisp poem 'Sunflower', speaking through his tears, challenged the teacher to put him to test. 'Fountain' was the title given and there was a spot composition to the admiration of the teacher and the amazement of the students. That was his maiden feat in composition. He has since composed over 200 kritis, varnams, etc., besides hundreds of *nirupanams* for musical discourses. An *asukavi*, he could compose on any subject *ex tempore*. He passed out and took to music successively under Ettayapuram Rajagopala Bhagavatar, son of the distinguished Ramachandra Bhagavatar, Dasavadyam Salem Veeraraghava Bhagavatar and Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar. He has imbibed much of the Maharajapuram style and is full of praise of the magnificent art of Ayyar. He was in the first batch of students at the Annamalai University Music College but left it after a few months. He is Mannargudi Sambasiva Bhagavatar, the harikatha maestro and Secretary cum Executive Trustee, Sri Tyagaraja Sangeeta Vidwat Samajam, Mylapore to which he is passionately devoted over the decades.

How was it that he took to musical discourse? He was not equipped for it. When the discourser stipulated for a day did not turn up at the Samajam, as Secretary he stepped in and gave a classical exposition which revealed his hidden talents, vast knowledge and immense capability. Instant offers to render similar exposition naturally forced him to specialise. His composing acumen is his *tour de force* to successfully pilot thematic musical discourses. 'Any subject' is good for him and he had covered over two hundred themes. Immense musicianship, vast repertoire of songs and free style of exposition added to his profound interest in delving deep into the reputed works of masters and highlight their bhava, rasa and message soon crowned him with success and popularity. 'Sambasiva' is his signature. Eminent violinists and percussionists have provided accompaniment to him. Sambasiva became a 'Bhagavatar', when Musiri Subramania Ayyar, prime exponent of bhava - rasa, hailed him as a bhava-rasa-katharatnakara.

Place of birth	:	Mannargudi
Parents	:	Rajam Ayyar & Minakshi Ammal
Debut	:	1933 at the Perambur Sabha, Madras.
Titles & Honours	:	

Harikatha Kalakshepa Jyoti by Swami Sivananda Saraswati, Rishikesh  
Kalaimamani by the Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram  
Sangeet Sahitya Joyti, Sangeeta Ratnam, Harikatha Sironmani, Nadakanal and Katharatnakara are among the titles he has been honoured with.

Post held : Harikatha Tutor, Government College of Carnatic Music, Madras.

Disciples : M. Chandrasekharan, Jaya Krishnan, Vocalist K.V. Krishnan and the late melody-queen N.C. Vasantakokilam .

**K.B. SUNDARAMBAL - MELODY QUEEN:****(c.1907 - Sept. 24, 1980)**

The lass was born poor in a very humble family but was rich in musical acumen and expression. The village of Kodumudi on the banks of the rejuvenating River Cauvery stole the distinction of cradling her on birth. Chill penury faced the child on birth and soon it found that it had to earn not only its bread but also her mother's. Penury did not fortunately stifle her noble rage and the lass went about trading her folk songs in delectable tunes for a few paise. Sympathetic people were not averse to part with a small coin in a *quid pro quo* for listening to the little girl's melody. But how long could this be done and continued?

Balambal, her mother took her daughter to the nearby town Karur, a nursery of Classical Carnatic music and found in R.S. Krishnaswamy Ayyar, Deputy Superintendent of Police, a sympathetic, music - loving officer. With understandable solicitude, he introduced the girl to the celebrated dramatist, P.S. Velu Nair, one of the reigning dramatists, in 1917. That was the first turning point in the life of K.B. Sundarambal, the ten-year old girl. Velu Nair could not be said to be extending any favour in taking the girl to his dramatic troupe since the girl's golden voice was an asset sufficient to lure a sizeable crowd. Her voice traversed the three octaves effortlessly without faltering. The rustic timbre was crisp, sure and steady. The strength and volume of the pitch were such that the hall would echo back from its corners in those days of mikeless dramas to packed houses. She took her rehearsals well and dished out melodious Carnatic tunes to the delight of the thronging crowds. And she was indeed *non pareil* in her majestic, magnificent melody. Hers was lakshya sangita at its best. Her musical talents grew with experience, exposure and age. It should be noted that she sang unconscious of and oblivious to theoretical stipulations for a long time.

Cinderella was rescued by a fairy godmother and then a Prince took notice of her. For this musical rustic girl, the Prince Charming was none other than the top star-dramatist, S.G. Kittappa. In the poem '*Milkmaid*', when the boy queries 'What is your fortune?', the girl answers, 'My face is my fortune'. The asset of the girl of Kodumudi was neither the beauty of Cinderella nor her face as in the case of the milkmaid. Her *forte* was her thrilling, captivating, enchanting, exhilarating, soulful voice. S.G. Kittappa with his keen ear for melody was passing by. He could not but pause to hear the arresting voice. It was love at first hearing and he was no Dushyant to forget this Sakuntala. It was a marriage of hearts, of melody, of the nobler elements of air and fire free from the base elements of earth and water. Brahmin Kittappa married the street-singer. This Marriage of Melodies in 1927 was the second turning point in her life. It was indeed a landmark in the annals of tamil stage. Of course it was the Age of Melody. But a combination of SGK - KBS could easily turn the wind and conquer the world any day and today too.

Chaste melody rich in mysteriously thrilling tone, brimming with bhava and rasa flowed from the two and people went crazy. All the air was filled by the magical names of the two. 1927-1933 was the Golden Era of Tamil Drama and Carnatic Music. The two Angels of Melody plundered the hearts of the *cognoscenti* and looted the emotions of the lay and the six years saw on the stage soulful music of a style never heard of before or thereafter. The impressionable era and the musical gala feast were too grand, glorious and extravagant to last for long. Kittappa died prematurely in 1933. A stunned and bereaved world of music, drama and culture in anguish could find none to fill the void. Sundarambal's grief too was understandable. It was Kittappa who raised her from a lowly street - singer to a respected dramatist, elevated her personal and social status and took her to his bosom. Ingratitude was not in her element. Twenty year old Cinderella found her twenty-one year old Prince. Was it only to lose him at twenty-six? Excruciating void.

She was entering on the third stage of her impressionable life. She rose above the stature of many of her ilk. She was born humble but she proved her greatness and incomparable faith in her Religion and Indian Culture. (When a famous American President died, there were suggestions that his popular spouse should refrain from remarriage but remain as the exalted Senior Lady of the Nation. But they went unheeded.) Young Sundarambal donned the white saree and marked her forehead with the sacred ash (*vibhuti*) in compliance with tradition. If her music was traditional, how could her way of life and faith be different ? She, in her appearance, gave the image of Woman Saints of the country. She lived a life of graceful rectitude giving concerts thereafter which were a delight. People admired her before but respected her now because flesh was flushed out of her life.

There were two films for which, it would appear, she was born with grace and spiritual charm. The first picture was Nandanar, the vibrant product of the great tamil revolutionary composer, Gopala Krishna Bharati. She played the lead-role and the role of the landlord was taken by Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar, the wizard of Carnatic music. It was a thundering success. The only poignant point was that Bharati who wove the great, first - ever socio-spiritual tamil opera a century earlier and Kittappa who ignored conventions and distinctions and gracefully grasped the hand of Sundarambal in wedlock were not there. The two hearts that would have cherished the success most had stopped to throb in 1881 and 1933! Sundarambal created history by receiving Rs.one lakh for the film - a sum unheard of then. Avvayar is the most fragrant flower of Tamil Poets of Wisdom. But people had not seen her; she was pre-historic. Sundarambal took the role of Avvayar in the film. It was a roaring success again.

Her expression and pronunciation of the sahitya (text of song) were crystal clear, facile, lucid and chaste exuding bhava and rasa. A devotee of Muruga,

she was admired and respected. The tamil proverb says, '*Kuppayil kidantalum kundumani niram maradu*' (The color of the Indian liquorice would not change even if it be in the dust). Sundarambal's life is a sparkling proof and specimen of that aphorism. There was grace, merit, culture and above all the image of perfect Indian womanhood. The Government recognised the truth and message of her life and in 1958, made her a Member of the Legislative Council - perhaps the only way to express the appreciation of the people as a whole. In 1964, the Tamil Isai Sangham conferred on her the title of Tamil Isai Perarignar.

Nallathangal was her first drama at Karur. It was to Karur that Sundarambal's mother went first like a 'Nallathangal' in distress. 'Valli Tirumanam' was the first drama at Colombo with S.G.K. as Muruga and K.B.S. as Valli. It was all *ex tempore* dialogues and songs and not the rehearsed routine as now. They excelled each other. It did not end in jealousy as in Poet Illango's Kovalan-Madhavi; their melodies were Heaven's gift for each other. When Kittappa died, she learnt Swara Gnana (expertise in swaras) and ascended the concert stage vowing that without Kittappa, the drama stage was a burning ghat to her. That an urchin girl could rise up to such sublime levels is a tribute to her innate heart born of sheer love and gratitude. It is said that she bore him four children but none survived, probably believing that her music was the best legacy to outlast her life !

Her films included :

Nandanar	Avvayar
Manimekhalai	Tiruvilayadal
Karaikal Ammaiyar	Poompuhar
Kandan Karunai	Thunaivan

Her immortal songs included:

Gnanappazhathai pizhindu	-	Ragamalika
Thanitthirundu vazhum	-	Todi
Vennir anindhadhenna	-	Shanmukhapriya

A 'Homa' bird as described by Swami Ramakrishna Paramahansa, her voice soared in the upper octaves effortlessly and felt at home and rarely faltered because of fatigue. Her lakshya-based concerts lasted for five hours and over.

Concert tours : Sri Lanka, Malaysia.

To invoke God for rains, Rishivandiyam in South Arcot was the venue for a concert of KBS. 'I shall sing till rains descend', she said while starting. Four and a half hours passed. Copious rains came ! Undeterred, she went on with her songs on Muruga. The drought-stricken people sat entranced in the downpour of rain and melody.

KBS, had, by document No. 6880 of 1975, created a trust of her properties for charitable and religious purposes. She had later executed a will by which she had confirmed it and bequeathed all her properties to the said trust. **It is said that the specific trust created by her had not been given effect to. This is for the Government to probe. This will is an expression of a sacred wish!**

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### **MALAVALLI SUNDARAMMA - VOCALIST:**

**(20th Century)**

Daughter of Subbanna and a child prodigy, Sundaramma had her lessons under her father and Vasudevachariar. Her speedy assimilation of the art enabled her to render even pallavi at the tender age of ten. In her fifteenth year, she had given her concert before the Maharaja of Mysore. Had sung for dramas also. Enjoyed a melodious voice.

Abhinaya Saradhe, a title and an award from the Music Academy, Madras in 1962 were among the recognition she got.

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### **P.R. SUNDAR RAJAN - VOCALIST:**

**(b. 1917)**

Parents	:	P.S. Ramachandra Ayyar & Kunjammal
Place of birth	:	Pudukkottai.

Sundar Rajan had his musical training under the junior of the Trichy Brothers, T.R. Swaminatha Ayyar, who is perhaps the senior most performing musician today. Later he learnt under Bangalore Prof. Ramachandra Ayyar who taught Mathematics at Vijaya College and music at home like Prof. R. Srinivasan. Made his debut at the Sadguru Sangeetha Sabha, Tiruchirapalli during the Tyagaraja Aradhana. Sundar Rajan was giving concerts on the All India Radio, Mysore, Bangalore and Tiruchirapalli and has been coaching a large number of disciples including the author of this book.

He has a very rich repertoire of Dikshitar kritis and is one of the few now who could boast of two hundred such kritis and over. Has evolved five pallavi(s) with notation and script. An amiable musician, he is said to be an expert in *vyvahara swaram*.

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### **A. SUNDARESAN - VOCALIST:**

**(b.1932)**

Parents	:	Appaswamy Ayyar, a sanskrit pandit, & Nagarathinammal.
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Sundaresan had a fine sense of music even while young and it attracted the notice of Vidwan T.V. Krishnamurti who took him as a disciple. 1942-1945 were

the years of his training. He enriched much of his musical stock by hearing celebrated vocalists like Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar, Ariyakudi Ramanuja Ayyangar and Madurai Mani Ayyar, passed the Praveen course of the Egmore Dramatic Society Sangita Vidyasala. He derived deep inspiration from Ramnad Krishnan and imbibed Veena Dhanammal style which he is said to have refined to suit his own genius and aspirations. He started giving concerts. His rendition is noted for sruti integrity and innovative swaras.

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### **M.A. SUNDARESWARAN - VIOLINIST:**

**(b.December 28, 1959)**

Violin would seem to have been introduced in Carnatic music for certain musical families to adopt or appropriate it as their own. The Parur family is one among them. Parur Sundaram Ayyar and his renowned sons, Anantaraman and Gopalakrishnan have distinguished themselves and M.A. Sundareswaran and his brother M.A. Krishnaswamy, sons of M.S. Anantaraman have inherited the rich family legacy. Sundareswaran has had the benefit of having training under his grandfather, father and uncle and is proficient in both the Hindustani and Carnatic styles. The father and his two sons have been giving trio - violin concerts and Sundareswaran is among the prominent violin artistes now. Besides he is 'A' Grade artiste with the All India Radio.

Disc recordings : Audio and Video cassettes as soloist and accompanist.

Concert tours : USSR, U.K., Australia and Singapore.

Title : Nada Oli Ratnam by the Dandayudhapani Bharata  
Naty Kalaigam, Madras in 1989 - besides awards  
from Music Academy, Indian Fine Arts, etc.

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### **R.K. SURYANARAYANA - VEENA ARTISTE:**

**(b. July 19,1926)**

Parents : R.S. Kesavamurti, Asthana vidwan, Mysore and  
Venkatalakshmi Ammal.

Suryanarayana hails from a musical family of musical Rudrapatnam and had his training with his father. Performed at the age of seven before the Maharajah of Mysore. His 23-stringed veena is a family heirloom treasured for three centuries. The extra strings produce orchestral sounds when the basic strings are struck. Suryanarayana has acted in a kannada movie and is Asthana

## Titles and Honours:

Kala Poorna  
 Malayamarutha  
 Veena Chakravarti  
 Bharata Vainika Rathna  
 Nadha Jyothi  
 Kalaimamani from the Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram in 1978.

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## PAZHAMANERI SWAMINATHA AYYAR - VIO-VOCALIST:

(1870- December 1942)

Gayaka Siromani Vidwan Swaminatha Ayyar was born in Pazhamaneri in Tanjore district, of Ramaswamy Ayyar in a family of vaidikas, scholars and musicians amidst the chosen environs of Nature with rich paddy fields, ample groves, rivers and channels intersecting roads and villages in the upper reaches of the Cauvery Delta. His birth coincided with the advent of many a stalwart like Annamalai Reddiar, Mysore Vasudevachariar, Veena Venkataramana Das, Bidaram Krishnappa, Poochi Srinivasa Ayyangar, Veena Dhanammal, Tirupazhanam Panchapakesa Sastri, Sarabha Sastri, etc. Studied Vedas under his father Ramaswami Ayyar. He was the most successful of the disciples of Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar. In his pallavi and swara singing, people saw glimpses of the Great Vidwan, his guru. He was the only musician to give vocal concerts, himself playing simultaneously the violin which he held up without resting it on his leg. His *forte* was the rendering of the padas of Kshetragana of which he had a considerable repertoire.

Swaminatha Ayyar was also a capable teacher. He was honoured by the Music Academy with the title of ' Sangita Kalanidhi ' in 1931. Pazhamaneri Swamigal, an Adwaitic Saint was his brother. Was a pioneer in publishing modern works with notation. Ayyar studied sanskrit works on music and published ' *Ragabhodini* ' early this century. He was on the Experts Committee of the Music Academy.

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## TRICHY SWAMINATHA AYYAR - VOCALIST:

(b.1910)

Perhaps the seniormost practising vocalist, Trichy Swaminatha Ayyar and his brother S. Ramachandra Ayyar were giving concerts as Trichy Brothers from 1926. Grandsons of Orapalli Ayya Bhagavatar and sons of Fiddle Subramania Ayyar, the duo were popular. Swaminatha Ayyar learnt music - both vocal and violin - from his father and special compositions from Tillaisthanam Panju Bhagavatar. Made his debut in 1926 at the Tiruvisanallur Ayyaval Jayanthi Celebrations. A versatile musician and a pallavi exponent, he has given many jugalbandi performances with Hindustani musicians and sings remarkably well in his eighties now.

Has composed tamil and sanskrit pieces. Was Principal, Sri Shanmukha-nanda Sabha Music School and Kalasadan, Bombay.

### Honours and Titles:

Sangeetha Ratna from Narada Gana Sabha, Madras  
Certificate of Merit from Music Academy, Madras.

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### UMAYALPURAM SWAMINATHA AYYAR - VOCALIST SUPREMO: (1867 -)

Umayalpuram has been one of the most fertile nurseries of classical Carnatic music - vocal, instrumental and percussive. Swaminatha Ayyar was a stalwart among them. Pupil of the famous Umayalpuram Krishna Bhagavatar and Sundara Bhagavatar, direct disciples of Tyagaraja, Swaminatha had learnt music earlier by closely watching his elder brother sing; later learnt under the Vainika Tiruvalangadu Tyagaraja Dikshitar and then under Kekkarai Muthu Ayyar. To crown it all, he underwent a four-year gurukulavasa under Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar when T.S. Sabhesa Ayyar and Pazhamaneri Swaminatha Ayyar were also under training. Quite fittingly all the three became Sangita Kalanidhis (title conferred by the Music Academy, Madras).

On his gurukulavasa, Swaminatha Ayyar says :

" In course of time, Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar came to like me. I used to accompany him to his concerts. Only occasionally he would give tuitions. But I would follow raga improvisation, swara combinations, techniques of pallavi rendition, etc., very closely, assimilate them and get doubts clarified by him. I had enquired him on the 22 srutis and he stated, " We have only 12 srutis. But in raga sancharas, in conformity with the bhava and the modulations of swaras, twenty- two srutis would automatically present themselves. But we could not specify their places. "

Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar had himself honoured his pupil with a tambura and a shawl! He presented him a book in manuscript got from a vidwan of Pudukottai who got it in turn from Tirunelveli giving the arohana-avarohana of 72 melakartas and of over a thousand janya ragas and raga lakshana gitams of over three hundred ragas. The guru-pupil relationship between the two is a succinct story and example of the form and secret of the success of gurukulavasa, an institution of unparalleled success now lost for ever. Mysore Vasudevachariar gives a like experience with his guru, Patnam Subramania Ayyar! The pupil is adopted into the home of the guru and becomes a mini version of the guru in art and science. The guru gave his all and the pupil took his guru as his god. It was not a syllabus-bound mechanical training but bhava-bhakti-jnana-dhana-oriented life which held sway from before the days of Vyasa-Suka down to the middle of the twentieth century in the fields of languages and arts. (For an epitaph on it please refer 'A Garland'.)



Ayyar was honoured by H.H. the Sankaracharya of Kanchi with the title of 'Nadanubhavasaraajnana' and was patronised by Tiruvaduthurai Mutt. His disciples are many including Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar and Semmangudi Srinivasa Ayyar.

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**Dr.U.Ve. SWAMINATHA AYYAR - BIOGRAPHER & MUSICOLOGIST:**  
(19 02 1855 - 28 04 1942)

' Dr. U.Ve. Swaminatha Ayyar and Subbarama Dikshitar were both orthodox brahmins who belonged to the old school and ways of living; but few modern scholars can compete with them for their modernity, integrity and prodigious industry. '

— T.S. Parthasarathy.

It is with a sense of veneration, admiration and amazement that I take my pen to write this brief biographical note on the greatest and foremost research scholar in tamil and an eminent biographer and musicologist. 'Swaminatha Ayyar competed with the bee and surpassed it in industry.' The Tamil World is eternally indebted to him for unearthing many a golden work which were decaying unhonoured and unrecognised and languishing unnoticed, unwept and unsung in the neglected labyrinths of far-flung villages. To Ayyar the renaissance and regeneration of tamil classics owe their glorious beginnings. His uncanny mind was able to trace and lay hands on hidden classics on palmyrah leaves in nooks and corners. His deep penetrative intellect deciphered and collated differing, discrepant scripts with the immense energy and enthusiasm of an explorer, epigraphist, linguist and crusader all in one. The super computerised efficiency of the crusading explorer brought back to focus and life work after work to the amazement and joy of tamil people and scholars.

Swaminatha Ayyar combined in himself broad vision with an incisive intellect, deep penetration with detective analysis, an untiring mind for details with immaculate power for codification. He was an excellent biographer, authentic historian, alluring short story writer, a linguist *non pareil* and a giant intellectually and physically. A wholesome product of the pristine culture of India, he was simple, affable, communicative and large-hearted. His statue adorns the campus of the Presidency College on the Marina in Madras. Opposite to his, stands **most significantly** the statue of Kannagi, the finest Symbol of Chastity and of Goddess Shakti, the noblest creation of the tamil poet, Illango, in his *Çilapathikaram* pointing to the statue of Ayyar as if declaring -

**' There sits the noble son of the tamil world who is an inspiration and trail-blazer to future generations! Revere him! '**

A library is run in the campus of Kalakshetra, Madras. His disciples were many including his son Kalyanasundaram Ayyar, M.V. Ramanujachariar, Chockalinga Tambiran and Ki.Va. Jagannathan. The library houses 2169 cadjan leaf manuscripts and 18000 printed books.

Son of Venkatasubba Ayyar and Saraswati Ammal, he was born at Uthamadanapuram in Tanjore district. At the age of seven, he went to Tirukundram in Udayarpalayam taluk and one day heard the song *Teeyinil moozhginar (Kanada)* in *Nandanar Charitram* drama enacted there. It was the drama on Harischandra, the Prince of Truth, in the case of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and Nandanar, the Apostle of Devotion, in the case of Swaminatha that acted as a catalytic agent. He was humming the songs the next day. The violinist-father was delighted to see his aptitude for music and started the preliminary lessons. Swaminathan had special lessons under –

Venkatanarayana Ayyar, his grandfather:	}	in sanskrit and music; and
Narayana Ayyar and Swaminatha Ayyar:		
Ariyalur Sadagopa Ayyangar, Kunnam Kasturi	}	in tamil.
Ayyangar and Senganam Vridhachala Reddiar		

On August 16, 1868, the thirteen year old Swaminathan married. In his case, it was **not** only not a case of 'vivaham vidya nacanam' (marriage blocks knowledge), but the plant learnt to flower with greater charm and colour with the tendril twining around and nourishing it.

From April 1870 to February 1, 1876, he studied under the great tamil savant Vidwan Meenakshisundaram Pillai and on the demise of that scholar, came under the direct tutelage of Sri Subramania Desikhar of Tiruvaduthurai Mutt. There ensued an era of unique and fruitful search and research on an unheard of scale and publication of tamil classics. Later Swaminatha Ayyar was Lecturer in Tamil, Government College, Kumbakonam, where he won the profound esteem of colleagues, students and the public. When he was giving tuitions to Salem Ramaswamy Mudaliar, District Munsif, he got exposure to the hidden treasures of ancient tamil works. Surely the scholar should have cried 'Eureka'. He should have shouted so not once but many more times since Destiny had to lay faith in this good son to retrieve one after another of unknown, hidden tamil classics as none else would do it. To decry eminence, there is a legion. The great series of publications started with '*Jeevaka Chintamani*' in 1887. The list of works published is long and strident and the manuscripts he left are equally large. 1861 saw *Nandanar Charitram* the first socio-spiritual tamil opera. In 1885, the Indian National Congress had its beginnings at Madras with its unique and un-paralleled history and influence. Indian and Tamil Renaissance was in full swing. U.Ve. Saa. was one of the ambrosial flowers who shaped music, language, biography, research, etc.

While yet a boy, in 1871 his violinist-father took him to Gopala Krishna Bharati for training in music. When it was mentioned that he was taking tuitions in tamil from Vidwan Meenakshisundaram Pillai, Bharati exclaimed, 'Meenakshisundaranar is an enemy of music' and that he would not permit it. Secretly the music tuitions started; but the Tamil savant once espied the boy humming his musical lessons and found out the truth. True to what Bharati had

said, 'Tamil or Music - not both', he ruled. Musical training was the casualty as Ayyar loved tamil more and Destiny played its role too. The chosen field of his advent and mission in life was unmistakably tamil. TAMIL WORLD IS STILL TO THROW UP AN EQUAL!

Legacy and aptitude for music did not however get lost in the waters of River Kudamurutti, or the River Cauvery which flow nearby. His innate genius asserted itself and he collected great many details of musicians and composers. Some have appeared in print and incomplete manuscript notes are extant. As I mentioned in 'A Garland' that the venerable Doctor thought of bringing out a collection on the lives of musicians but his crowded life was a fight against the clock and the calender. His weighty contributions attracted the notice of the Lord and he was withdrawn to be by His side - but only after he had completed the memorable publication of the lives of Gopala Krishna Bharati, Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar and Ghanam Krishna Ayyar. They are excellent biographies noted for factual integrity, beauty and clarity. All the great maestros were great lovers of tamil zoo. 'Dr Ayyar has written a series of delightful vignettes besides his own biography which he left incomplete on his demise as 800 pages had brought it up only to 1900 with forty-two impressionable years left uncovered. 'His account of meeting Sankarabharanam Narasa Ayyar, etc., gives a strident and startling account of men and matters, social values and economic conditions. His works are characterized by 'intricacy of detailing, virtuosity of workmanship and overall coherence'.

Titles and honours have no relevance to such Men of Destiny. Here are some:

Mahamahopadhyaya	Government of India	1906.
Dravida Vidya Bhushanam	Bharatha Dharma Mandal	1917.
Dakshinadya Kalanidhi	Sri Sankaracharya of Kanchi Kamakoti Mutt	1925.
Doctorate	University of Madras	1932.

#### Official posts held :

Lecturer in Tamil, Government College, Kumbakonam:	February 16, 1880 - 1903.
Lecturer, Presidency College, Madras	1903 - 1919.
Principal, Sri Meenakshi Tamil College, Chidambaram	1924 - 1927.

True greatness is ever humble; water in full pot spills not. Swaminatha Ayyar was a teacher of teachers and a pioneer research-scholar of vast parts, deep penetration and captivating expression. His diction is of Gandhian simplicity, at once charming and dazzling. The panorama of his activity was gigantic. His vivid memory was a challenge to the computer. The eminence of the man has not been receiving the recognition that is his due in the last few decades, it is felt. His monumental work and immortal contribution are apt to escape the notice of the younger generation. The fiftieth year of his demise was celebrated by well - meaning admirers like G.K. Moopanar at Kumbakonam near

Uthamadanapuram on 28-04-1992. I could not resist the temptation to linger on a little more on his historic life - a watershed in the history of tamil and music.

What was the condition of tamil classics prior to 1887?

" Great poets had heard of Sangam literature but knew not what they were. Kovalan, Kannagi and Madhavi were mere names in folk tales and ballads and none knew that they were characters in the classic '*Cilappadhikaram*'. They knew not the difference between '*Agananooru*' and '*Purananooru*' nor were they aware of the religion to which the classic '*Manimekhalai*' related ! "

Thanks to the life-long labours and service of the Doctor, even boys in elementary schools know it all now. That is the imperishable magnificence of his work and the magnitude of his monumental contribution. The tamil savant Thiru. Vi. Ka. sums up thus:

' U. Ve. Sa's birth was Tamil; his growth was Tamil. His life was Tamil. He had his whole being in Tamil. He became Tamil. And he was Tamil.'

The mighty Rajaji, never known for his liberal praises, calls Ayyar ' Tamil Vyasa'. Reverentially called 'Tamil Thatha' (GOM), Doctor U. Ve.Sa. combined in himself the pioneering energies of a Kalhan in historic perception, a Venkatamakhin in codification, a Vyasa in story-writing, a Subbarama Dikshitar in presenting a thesaurus and a Dickens in gracious flowing style. National Poet Mahakavi Subrahmanya Bharati adored him as ' Kumbha Muni ' of eternal fame.

### **Publications:**

By Ayyar :

Tamil Sangham Compilations  
Sthala puranams

Tamil Kavyas  
Grammar Prabhandas &  
a host of other items.

By the library:

Sangham Literature and a large number of other items.

\* \* \*

### **KUDANTHAI SWAMINATHA SASTRIGAL - COMPOSER/TEACHER:**

**(20th Century)**

Swaminatha Sastrigal had his musical training and inspiration from Veena Varadayya, Tiruvaiyaru Ramamurti Ayyar, Umayalpuram Swaminatha Ayyar, Vedaranyam Pallavi Ramachandra Ayyar, Kallidaikurichi Sundaram Ayyar and Tiger Varadachariar - an array of stalwarts. Was Music Teacher, Tirutturaipundi Government High School and is now running the Tyaga Brahma Sangita Vidyalaya for training students. Has composed two hundred songs with the signature ' Varadadasan '. Has published '*Gana Sudha*' in 1978.

\* \* \*

# T

## S. THATHACHARIAR - VIOLINIST:

(b.1917)

Son of Srinivasachariar, Thathachariar stopped his collegiate studies with Intermediate and took to music. Had his training with Veena Krishnamachariar of Arya Gana Vidyasala and later in 1938 under Rallapalli Anantakrishna Sarma. He started giving concerts on the All India Radio in 1938 and soon was appointed as Staff Artiste. Later he went over to Akash Vani, Mysore in 1942 and then to Bangalore and retired. Much of his musical activity was for the All India Radio.

\* \* \*

## COIMBATORE THAYEE - VOCALIST :

(1872 - 1917)

Palani Kunjaram, daughter of musician Vengathammal became Coimbatore Thayee later, the word of affection prevailing over the designated name. She learnt dance under Subbaraya Nattuvanar and music under Karur Ramachary, Mysore Kempa Gowda, Kivalur Ramachandra Ayyar as well as Tiruvisanallur Narayanaswami Ayya. For professional causes, she shifted to the more prosperous Madras and enjoyed a large number of concerts in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. Though she did not enjoy a majestic (gambhira) voice, her tone and rendition were soothing and satisfying. Her four-hour concerts would start with four kalais and with pallavi would come to two kalais and there would a happy blend of javalis, tamil songs etc. Enjoyed an immense repertoire. Lalitangi (M.L.V's mother) was among her disciples. Tiruvotriyur Tyagayyar was her patron.

Disc recordings:

\* \* \*

## THAYUMANAVAR - DEVOTIONAL POET

(1705 - 1742)

The restless life found itself in tune only with nobler elements and propagated basic principles of morality to enlighten the public. Having experienced Bliss, he exhorted the people to follow the basic tenets of Godliness. God has neither caste nor family, neither birth nor death. His works '*Anandakalippu*' and '*Parapara Kanni*' bring out the essence of true spiritualism.

Thayumanavar was born at the scriptural jungle called Vedaranyam, of Kediliappa Pillai and Gajavalli. An enlightened man and enterprising agriculturist, his father was taken by the Chieftain at Tiruchirapalli, Muthu Vijaya Reghunatha Chockalinga Nayak for Palace Administration. Thayumanavar who had undergone studies in tamil, telugu and sanskrit, stepped into his father's

post on the latter's demise. When the Chieftain died his lady is stated to have felt drawn by the attractive features of Thayumanavar. Well-versed in philosophy and thirsting for God-realisation, Thayumanavar realised that the palace was ill-suited for his life's mission and left. He was on pilgrimage, married and lost his wife when she begot a child. His songs are popular.

\* \* \*

**THENMATTAM BROTHERS:**

**NARASIMHACHARIAR - VIOLINIST:**

**VARADACHARIAR - VIOLINIST & VAINIKA:**

(d. 1952)

Thenmatam Brothers were tutors to quite a large number of lady artistes and both were sahitya kartas also composing kirtans, swarajatis and gitas. Their compositions were published in a book titled *Sangitananda Ratnakara*. About fifty pieces do not seem to have been published yet. The violinists were religious and were popular in Andhra Pradesh. Narasimhachariar had translated Ramayana also into telugu. The *Journal of the Music Academy*, Madras makes special mention of their musical capabilities. Chinna Singaracharyulu wrote in 1905 that the Brothers were good violinists.

\* \* \*

**K.C. THIAGARAJAN - MUSICIAN:**

(b. Decr.15, 1913)

Thiagarajan was born at Krishnapuram in Pattukottai taluk, of K.C. Chidambara Ayyar, a tamil vidwan and Chellammal. He had his training in music under Veedividangan Pillai of Tiruvarur and Tanjore Krishnamoorti Nayudu. Was Music Producer, All India Radio during 1939 - 1971. Thiagarajan was vocalist and instrumentalist who could play on violin, gottuvadyam and jalatarangam. He has been giving concerts and taking earnest interest in the deliberations of the Experts Committee of the Music Academy, Madras. Has contributed articles. He became Principal, Teachers' College run by the Academy in 1971. The versatile artiste-pedagogue was honoured with a Certificate of Merit by the Academy in 1977.

\* \* \*

**TANJORE THUKKARAM - MRIDANGAM MAESTRO:**

(c.1860/1900)

A good man and a good percussionist, Thukkaram had provided percussion support to top vocalists like Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar, Patnam Subramania Ayyar and Todi Sundara Rao. Was famous for '*meetu, gumki and purattal*', fingering and contrived sound variations. He accepted concerts without distinction for all.

Son of Vittal, a devotee of Pandurangan of Pandaripur, Thukkaram also

mridangam. The finer aspect of it is that the gumkaram would be raised both when his hand goes to and from on the thoppi; perhaps few could do it. Sulamangalam Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar pays glowing tributes to the intricacies of his play. If during a concert, the instrument develops *sruti bheda*, he would not stop to rectify as most do but would go on giving accompaniment with the thoppi Valantaram till the song is over. This is a practice worth emulation atleast when the principal artiste is gathering momentum. (Tirukkodikaval Krishna Ayyar and one or two others are credited with playing on a single string on such occasions without stopping to rectify their violin.) Thukkaram came to be called 'Thoppi Thukkaram'. Bhagavatar records that Dakshinamurthy Pillai, Azhaga nambi Pillai and other stalwarts drew inspiration from Thukkaram. 'Only in the concerts of Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar and Sarabha Sastri, his play could not dominate on the principal artiste. All others would get dwarfed.' (Bhagavatar). Bhagavatar's description of Thukkaram vis-a-vis ordinary musicians reminds the author of Fred Allen's sarcasm —

'The lion and the calf may lie together;  
But the calf would not get much sleep.'

\* \* \*

**THULASEEVANAM - COMPOSER:**

**(b. 1940)**

Ramachandran Nair, I.A.S. is an eminent lyricist and Thulaseevanam is his pseudonym. He is a scholar in malayalam and sanskrit and started composing songs in 1971. A disciple of Sri Paramabhattaraka Sri Vidyarthi Raja Swamigal, his lyrics are profoundly devotional. He has drawn inspiration from the compositions of Swati Tirunal Maharajah, Narayana Tirtha and Jayadeva and 'his Gitaganga is perennial' - Thulaseevana Sangita Parishat propagates his compositions.

\* \* \*

**TIRUVOTRIYUR TYAGAYYAR - COMPOSER/TALAMALIKA SPECIALIST:**

**(1845 - 1917)**

Son of Vina Kuppayyar, the eminent disciple of Tyagaraja, Tiruvotriyur Tyagayyar had his training under Fiddle Ponnuswami (and perhaps his father). A delectable composer of tana varnas, ragamalikas and kritis, he was a specialist in talamalika compositions with different sections in different talas particularly in pallavis. 'His compositions are replete with raga bhava - sangatis reflecting the diverse facets of the raga - presenting its melodic personality...He was the first composer in the annals of Carnatic music to have composed Ashtotra group kritis and only Harikesanallur Muthiah Bhagavatar had later emulated him.' (Dr. S. Seetha) He had used *Adi* tala for 102 kritis, *Rupaka* for five and *Tripata* for one, but 108 ragas without repeating any. His compositions are full of technical and rhetorical flourishes.

His varnams include:

Inthamodi	in Saranga raga
Karunimpa idi	in Sahana raga
Chalamela	in Durbar raga
Saraguna	in Madyamavati raga
Sami, Dayajuda	in Kedaragoula raga

Published two works –

*'Pallavi Swarakalpavalli'* (1900) and  
*'Sankirtana Ratnavali'* (1907).

The first contains the compositions of his father and his own.

\* \* \* \* \*

### STAGE MANAGEMENT

The concert was on before a packed audience. Suddenly the head of a goose fell on the stage. The manager promptly advanced to the front and with the usual courtesies announced:

‘Gentlemen, if anyone among you has lost his head please do not be uneasy. I shall restore it at the conclusion of the concert.’

— Edmund Fuller.

Absolutely professional.

\* \* \*

### UNBEATEN YET

Gurukulavasa yielded to training schools and colleges or tuitions under chosen musical masters. Some had/have full or part-time courses. Correspondence courses with cassettes and notes arrived. Now there are musical lessons on phone! **Still modern methods of teaching lag behind the old.** *'Manasikha gurukulavasa'* (preceptors of inspiration) was a brilliant concept which had helped many to rise to dizzy heights like :

Uthukadu Venkatasubba Ayyar had Lord Krishna,  
Papanasam Sivan had Konerirajapuram Vaidyanatha Ayyar;  
G.N. Balasubramaniam had Ariyakudi Ramanuja Ayyangar.  
Vinjamuri Varadaraja Ayyangar had Tiger Varadachariar and  
Ariyakudi Ramanuja Ayyangar.

Ekalavya of the epics adopted the unwilling preceptor Drona himself and outshone his chosen student Arjuna. Dedication, determination won him the skill.

Here is a view of Mannargudi Sambasiva Bhagavatar of the Tyagabrahma Sabha, Madras on correspondence courses:

‘A home science student added up everything but forgot to ignite the stove since it was not in the spirit. The same can be said of the same condition.’



# U

## A. V. UNNIKRISHNAN - FLAUTIST:

(b.September 10, 1935)

Place of birth	:	Pilicode in Kasargod district.
Parents	:	T. Unnikrishnan - Thirumumpa. Father had his own kathakali troupe. His children are all trained in music or in bharatanatyam.
Training in music	:	Gurukulavasam under T.K.Radhakrishnan for ten years from 1956.

Unnikrishnan started giving concerts on the All India Radio in 1964. From 1970 to 1989, he had been travelling abroad as accompanist to bharatanatyam dancers and incidentally giving concerts too. Had given concerts for television networks in USA, Canada and USSR. Has toured Japan, China, Pakistan, South Africa, Europe, Malaysia and Singapore, besides others. The tours were either privately sponsored or arranged by the ICCR.

Title: Sangeethajna

Unnikrishnan has faith in music as a successful profession notwithstanding competition and favouritism.

\* \* \*

## P. UNNIKRISHNAN - VOCALIST:

(b.July 9,1966)

Parents	:	K. Radhakrishnan & Harini Radhakrishnan
Musical training under	:	V.L. Seshadri, Dr. S. Ramanathan and Savitri Satyamurti.
Special coaching under:	:	T.Brinda with scholarship.
General qualification	:	B.Com., D.P.A.

'Kesari Kuteeram' building at Royapettah was a familiar sight for long. Music Academy is stated to have functioned in it as a fledgling. Grandson of its owner, Dr.K.N.Kesari, Unnikrishnan made his debut at Palghat in 1980 for the Fine Arts Society. Has a pleasing, resonant voice, natural talents, felicity, flexibility and imagination. A cricketeer, Unnikrishnan is a popular artiste who brings to play in concerts a variety of strokes well-planned and executed to ensure comprehensive audience receptivity and appeal - a formula now resorted to by rising artistes with differing shades of success. *Shanmukha* records, 'For one so young, the maturity in perception and presentation is something rare to come across'.

\* \* \*

**USHA RAJAGOPALAN - VIOLINIST:****(20th Cent.)**

Musical training under: A.S. Ananthagopalan &amp; Padmavati Anantagopalan.

Having had her training from her sixth year, Usha Rajagopalan made her debut at the age of twelve and has been having quite a large number of concerts providing accompaniment to distinguished musicians. A Graduate in Commerce, Usha Rajagopalan is a Staff Artist with the All India Radio. Has won awards from the Music Academy, Madras, etc. A complete violinist.

Concert tours: Middle East and Singapore.

\* \* \* \* \*

**THE HIT & THE HIT BACK**

Mridangam maestro Tanjore Vaidyanatha Ayyar's house. An informal select gathering. On request, the celebrated Mazhavai Subbarama Bhagavata took up raga *Malavi* for elaboration and pallavi. Exquisite was the rendition. He adopted a rare tala by name *Lakshmeesa*. T.K. Murti who provided the mridangam support and who was then an apprentice under Vaidyanatha Ayyar faltered and stumbled in identifying the tala. A hurt guru hit him for lack of understanding.

Vaidyanatha Ayyar was not only guru to Murti but his foster father. Murti hit back. How ? With a heartwarming solo (*tani avarta*) in that tala.

— B.M. Sundaram in 'Srutii'

*Vide* page 478 of *A Garland* for musicians who were not spared of the rod.

\* \* \*

**RAGAMUDRA**

The Pandit was stressing the peculiarity of Muthuswami Dikshitar inscribing the ragamudra in each song so that the raga swaroopas could stand fixed unalterably but that Tyagaraja did not adopt that mode of composition.

Tyagaraja Rasika (?) : He too has done it in *Chani Todi Teve*.

The song is in *Harikambhoji* and the word 'Todi' does not refer to the raga.. The line actually means :

'Oh maid of my mind ! Go and bring quick my Lord.'

— R. Vedavalli on 05-07-1992.

\* \* \*

# V

## VADIRAJA - DEVOTIONAL POET:

(c.1480 - 1600)

Called Bhuvvara, born at Huvvinakere in South Kanara, of Devaramabhata and Gowri, Vadiraja came to be called so in recognition of his dialectical talents. The famed ruler Krishna Deva Raya called him *Prasangabharana Tirtha*. While young, he came under the grace of Swami Vagisa of Swadi Mutt. Puranas speak of the discord between young Vigneswara and his younger brother Kartikeya all over a fruit, in which the intellectual elder deprived the younger of the fruit in spite of his whirlwind marathon. The fruit thus came to be called the Fruit of Wisdom (*Jnanapazham*). Issac Newton was attracted by the fall of an apple. Even Adam and Eve could not resist their tasting the forbidden fruit notwithstanding the prohibition! But young Vadiraja alone remained passive, a monument of self-knowledge and self-control when Guru Vagisa asked his disciples to help themselves with fruits heaped before them. (Vadiraja probably took the cue from the Vigneswara episode but excelled Him by not taking any. Did not Maitreyi tell her husband Yajnavalkya that she did not want the material wealth he offered her but sought for the imperishable? When Yajnavalkya brought a scene of Mithila in flames, did not the disciple-ruler Janaka alone sit unconcerned saying, 'If Mithila goes, I have no concern' to illustrate detachment! Their reaction is similar, it will be seen.)

When questioned, he gave his reply in an '*ugabhoga*' context. His first composition prior to renunciation was that he desired devotion to his guru, the grace of God and renunciation. He succeeded his guru and was benefited by the teachings of Vyasaraya of Vijayanagar.

Prolific in his writings in sanskrit and kannada, he composed thousands of kirtanas and devaranamas under the signature 'Hayavadana'. His songs are sung at the Mutts. For the benefit of Tulu speaking people, he composed *devaranamas* in that language too. Wrote *Rukminisa Vijaya*, a literary mahakavya.

He lived in Swadi village and entered Brindaban samadi alive. Illustrious saints of Hinduism have dismantled their earthly coils so.

\* \* \*

## KONERIRAJAPURAM VAIDYANATHA AYYAR - VOCAL MAESTRO:

(1878 - 1921)

Konerirajapuram Vaidyanatha Ayyar was not only an eminent musician but is the *summum bonum* of many a proverb like 'where there is a will there is a

way' and '*verbum sapienti sat*' (a word enough for a wise man) *A Garland* details how he rose up to the top taming his gruff voice. He might have remained an inglorious voice-support but for the taunting words of Panchapakesa Sastri.

His period was still within the bullock-cart age and he was passing through Pudupatti (now in Pudukottai district) in a cart (single or double, bullocks with or without horns, it is not stated). His breezy, alapana-oriented, *durita-kala* mind was ill at ease with the *tsouka-kala* slow movement of the vehicle with its deaf driver. How long could a stalwart vocalist remain mute? He asked a pedestrian about the distance and there was no response. Ayyar soliloquised, 'So, you are also deaf!' The cart was just a furlong further off when a peon stopped the cart and led them to a magistrate! Innocent Ayyar could not fathom the reason and politely revealed who he was. As if shocked by electricity, the magistrate was all respect, recollected the Vidwan's concerts with Palani Krishnier, etc., and apologised. The pedestrian was the magistrate himself and had felt insulted for having been questioned like a commoner on the road and dubbed as deaf. The incident is mentioned here to indicate the fame and renown the maestro had enjoyed. If King Udayanan soothed the mad elephant with his play on yazh, Vaidyanatha Ayyar conquered the musical world with his chastised and tamed voice! Rahmat Khan, a North Indian maestro once said:

**'He has his music in his throat;  
We have it on our thighs.'**

Strangely, **Ayyar had it in both** as he was a trail-blazer in laya-fortified music too.

Parents	:	Narayana Ayyar & Sitalakshmi.
Marriage	:	At the age of twelve.
Extended musical training with	:	Nagaswaram Palanivelu, Marudhanallur Kulandaiswami and Chinna Kulandaiswami
		Melattur Sundara Bhagavata and Venkatarama Bhagavata.
Disciples	:	Mudicondan Venkatarama Ayyar
		Budalur Krishnamurti Sastriyal, Coimbatore Viswanathan, etc.

Vaidyanatha Ayyar was a vādama (sub-sect) but was the chosen hero of vādama people. He evinced special solicitude for his pupils, purchased the same cloth as he wore, encouraged them to sing at concerts and got gifts for them. A liberal, he was noble in his outlook in days of asserted primacy of vocalists *vis-a-vis* accompanists. He would even wait for the accompanists to arrive and receive them with cordiality taking his role to be just a *primus inter pares*. No wonder that his image was high and Papanasam Sivan chose him as

Sulamangalam Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar recalls Ayyar's rendition elaborating the phrase '*nigama cirorttamu*' in '*Sogasuga mridanga talamu*' (*Sri Ranjani*) alone for an hour and half at Sri Ayyaval Utsav, Tiruvisanallur bringing out his innovative, intuitive skills with riotous brikas and graces. He mentions that the Melody-King Pushpavanam sat spell-bound.

\* \* \*

**MAYURAM VEENAI VAIDYANATHA AYYAR - VEENA ARTISTE: (c.1880)**

A lakshana vidwan known for his celebrated rendition of kritis, Vaidyanatha Ayyar was a close friend of the illustrious composer of the revolutionary socio-religious opera in tamil *Nandanar*. He freely used Bharati's songs which were popular at his concerts. Sulamangalam Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar states that the Veena artiste and Tirukodikaval Krishna Ayyar would play in perfect unison delightfully, that he would present veena duet with Tiruvalangadu Tyagaraja Dikshitar, that he would sing while playing on veena and that his son Veena Sabhesan too was an accomplished player on veena. T.C.A. Chinna Singaracharyulu wrote in 1905:

'Mayuram Vaidyanatha Ayyar is a good lutanist, an able pallavi singer, a good vocalist and an able master of gesticulations. It is difficult to see in future another of his ability His son plays on lute delightfully and has extraordinary skill in swaras.'

\* \* \*

**J. VAIDYANATHAN - MRIDANGIST: (b.April 22, 1965)**

Son of Sangita Kalanidhi D.K. Jayaraman, Vaidyanathan had his training under Palghat Mani Ayyar and his son T.R. Rajamani, Palghat Kunjumani, Dindigul Ramamurti and Tanjore Ramadoss. Had specialised training under Dr. T.K. Murthy. He had pursued his training with scholarships from the Government of India. Has been having good practice and 'his play of chapu sequences turn well and pharns (fast patterns) have excellent clarity'.

Concert tours:

U.S.A., USSR.

Title:

Yuva Kala Bharati by Bharat Kalachar 1991.

\* \* \*

**O.S. VAIDYANATHAN (ARUN) - VOCALIST: (20th cent.)**

Born in a musical family, O.S.Vaidyanathan popularly known as Arun sings with a natural flair. Has an impressive tone, range and balance of voice. Had his initial training under his father, Sangeetha Bhushanam O.V.Subramaniam and then completed 'Visharad Purna', an integrated course in music at the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya, Delhi. He stood first in the diploma course

'Sangeetha Shiromani' of the Delhi University.

'Oh Yes' has been giving concerts on All India Radio, Doordarshan, sabhas, etc. Arun's musical talents are extensive and varied. He has been presenting choral compositions like his own '*Rain*' (*Misra Kapi* and *Pantumarali*) and pieces of well-known composers like Balamurali Krishna and Lalgudi Jayaraman.

Concert tours:

Europe,	Middle East,	USSR,	Australia,
China,	Hong Kong,	Fiji,	North Korea,
U.K.,	Mauritius and	Afghanistan.	

America and Africa probably are waiting to hear his impressive music!

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**VAIYAPURI DEVAR - MRIDANGIST:**

**(b.1916)**

Father : Kandaswami Devar, Chidambaram

Vaiyapuri Devar migrated to Mysore and had been accompanying prominent musicians. The Maharajah of Mysore honoured him in 1962 and he is the recipient of the title 'Mridanga Nada Praveena' from the Tirumalai Tirupati Devasthanams. Venkatesa Devar was his guru.

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**TIGER VARADACHARIAR - VOCALIST/PEDAGOGUE:**

**(1876 - Jan'y 31, 1950)**

'*A Garland*' carries at pages 399-400 the biography of Tiger Varadachariar, one of the finest of musical souls of Carnatic music. The magnificence of his musical scholarship and the panorama of his multi-dimensional life cry for some more details being recorded.

✓ Mysore Vasudevacharya recorded of Varadachariar:

'The most celebrated master of *bhava-bharita sangeetham*, enjoyed profound scholarship, child-like innocence, purity of heart and simple and elegant manners.'

Veena Balachander wrote six stanzas on Tiger and one is extracted below:

'He who commanded the respect of one and all  
Was a giant in size but a soft child at heart.  
While many other musicians might rise or fall,  
His glory, for eternity, will ever remain apart.'

In the photo at page LXX of '*A Garland*', the Tiger is seated at the centre in the first row. It was taken during the annual celebrations of Sri Krishna Bhajana Mandiram run by Mandhai Saa. Krishna Ayyar, the author's uncle. It shows the

stature of Varadachariar among musicians. S.Y.Krishnaswami paid his tribute to the maestro in '*Swatantra*' thus:

' His approach was romantic. Unending search for newer and yet newer forms for variations was his forte - not the chiselled patterns of set beauty.'

The observations are all true to facts. He did not enjoy a beautiful personality; his voice was not melodious. But his vidwat was colossal and his rank among musicians was that of Abu Ben Adam. His presence added charm and dignity to the assembly. Yet he was not - never - rich and he bore with smile the grinds of poverty till Rukmini Devi of Kalakshetra stepped in to patronise him and his end is described by James H.Cousins in a letter to Rukmini Devi thus:

' At 2 p.m., he fell ill and told his attendant that he had his "Celestial Call". He asked him to be sung to...There was bhajan till the flames ungulfed the mortal remains of the *Gayaka Vyagra* (Musical Tiger).'

The carnivorous feline quadruped is noted for its ferocity and rapacity. The musical tiger was a gentleman *non pareil* of Cardinal Newman's description full of grace, warmth, solicitude and musical eminence. The innate joviality of his throbbing human heart was infectious. The utter nobility of the genial soul rarely betrayed the pangs of economic hardships. Elsewhere mention has been made of the surprise of the Tamil savant Meenakshisundaram Pillai when he had the luxury of being served with a spoonful of ghee in a frugal vegetarian fare in a mutt. They are the immortals whom the golden pages of history rich with the aroma of their legacy could ill-afford to omit as they constitute the foundation and the corner-stone, the flower and fragrance of Indian culture and civilisation. It is difficult to spot out such a genial man full of musicianship and human grandeur among the present.

1940 Tiruvaiyaru Aradhana Festival. Tiger and his disciples from Annamalai University stayed in a room and officials occupied the opposite room. Tiger slept in the corridor, his 'snoring surpassing recognised sruti and gamaka variations'. A Parsi Engineer, while passing him, remarked to his friend:

' Is this the fellow you call Tiger?

He makes all sorts of funny noise !

A voice responded:

" Yes, yes. This fellow is the Tiger.

He can improvise many more noises too!"

The Parsi had not heard of musicians speaking english and before he could collect himself, Tiger had started *ex tempore* on a scintillating elaboration in raga *Begada* to his further discomfiture.

Gandhi cap was the universal fashion of those days being a symbol of patriotism and Tiger had a natural fascination for it. Jocularly he would say, 'Before you are capped by others, better do it yourself'. But the cap ill-suited his figure and gave a grotesque shape reminding friends and admirers of the Panchatantra story of the cap merchant and the monkeys. But Tiger was not willing to improve his personality at the cost of the cap. Ultimately when Vasudevachar came and Tiger wanted him to sing a particular song, the Mysore Veteran agreed subject to an unspecified gift. Tiger agreed to it little suspecting that Vasudeva would snatch away his cap in a *quid pro quo* for that single song.

'Even an elephant is apt to take a false step', runs the proverb. There is no such pithy saying *vis a vis* the Tiger. He was singing *Birana Valalichi (Kalyani)* of Syama Sastri. The percussionist had to align the sruti of his mridangam. When Tiger restarted, he inadvertently had jumped to *Birana Brova ite*. Startled, he whispered to his disciple, 'Vasu, the train stands derailed'. He stopped it there at once, says T. Sankaran.

The musical Kamadenu bore a misleading sobriquet and dished out soulful music, spread musical knowledge and extended exuberant conviviality. He was a great man and a great musician. In fact all the three brothers - Tiger, Veenai Krishnamachariar and Srinivasa Ayyangar were all flitered eminent men of culture and music.

\* \* \*

**Dr. VINJAMURI VARADARAJA IYENGAR - VOCALIST/MUSICOLOGIST:**  
(July 15, 1915 - August 16, 1991)

Music wooed Patriotism and both echoed in unison in the family. Large was the family and total was its participation in the Independence Movement including jail terms. Musicians frequented their home which bubbled with musical activity like the houses of D.K. Pattammal, S. Rajam—S. Balachander and T. Lakshmana Pillai. Advocate V. Srinivasachari was a flautist; V. Ananthachary took to veena and played *Bhagavad Gita* to Gandhiji at the Wardha Ashram daily. Some took to violin. Vinjamuri Varadaraja Iyengar, the last of the thirteen children of V. Bhuvanachariar and Kanakavalli was a vocalist. He was born at Guntur.

Varadaraja Iyengar, a Bachelor of Arts of the Andhra University, had his initial training in music during 1920–1933 under Shankara Sastri, a disciple of Tiruvottiyur Tyagayyar, a stalwart musician-composer and grand-disciple of Tyagaraja. Iyengar had his advanced training from Tiger Varadachariar from 1934 and moved with him to Chidambaram after taking a diploma in music from the Madras University. Like G.N.B., he had Ariyakudi Ramanuja Ayyangar as 'manasikha' guru. Owing to these affiliations, he gained the sobriquets 'Kutti



Made his debut at the age of seven at Guntur before the celebrated Veena Seshanna. Known for his delectable swara exposition and tana, he had also imbibed the innovative fresh approach of the guru, the Tiger. Well-versed in many languages, his sahitya pronunciation exuded clarity. A firm believer in classical traditions, he was widely respected. Had given performances all over India and abroad, at palaces and in sabhas. In rendition of songs and alapana in raga 'Todi', he was in the distinguished company of Todi Sitaramayyar, Todi Kotiswara Ayyar and Todi T.N. Rajarathinam. His guru Shankara Sastri has extolled his talents and expertise in special poems composed by him. When Pushpavanam did not arrive Ariyakudi stepped-in to give the concert to shine forth for decades as the top musician. Likewise G.N. Balasubramaniam acted as stepney and rose to the top. When Ariyakudi could not give the concert, he himself asked Varadaraja Iyengar in 1935 at the Rasika Ranjani Sabha to take his place, with Rajamanickam Pillai on violin and Pudukkottai Dakshinamurti Pillai on mridangam. That was the measure of his confidence in the musicianship of Varadaraja Iyengar. For one of his concerts, Chowdiah did not arrive. Varadaraja Iyengar took Flute Maestro T.R. Mahalingam to play on violin with Palani Subbudu to assist on mridangam. It was a concert by titans. Known for his weighty classicism and traditional approach, he was popular. His repertoire was vast. Stalwart violinists and percussionists have provided accompaniment to him. His respect for his preceptors was so high that he withdrew his recordings of *O! Jagadamba (Anandabhairavi)* and *Sri Subramanyaya (Kambhoji)* in deference to the views of Tiger. Dr. Vinjamuri Varadaraja Iyengar Memorial Society, Hyderabad now seeks to propagate the ideals of Iyengar.

### Posts held:

Founder-Principal of the College of Carnatic Music, Hyderabad	1952-1953
Producer of Music, All India Radio, Hyderabad	1956-1964
First General Secretary, Sri Tyagaraja Sangeetha Vidwat Samajam, Mylapore, Madras	1946 onwards.

He was connected in various capacities with Tyagaraja Samajam, Nellore, Ganakala Parishat, Rajahmundry, Tyagaraja Brahmotsava Sabha, Tiruvaiyaru, State Sangita Nataka Academy and a host of others. He introduced on the All India Radio programmes like Bhaktiranjani, Sangita Sikshana, Vadya Brinda, etc.

Concert tours abroad :	Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka and U.S.A. (thrice)
Compositions :	Tana varnas, kritis, tillanas and a javali. Has given lectures and demonstrations as a musicologist.
Disc recordings :	Gave two initially. As his mentor, the 'Tiger' was against discs, he cancelled the recordings and desisted in deference to his opinion

### Honours and Titles:

Gold Medal	From Music Academy, Madras	1936
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Gana Vidya Visarada		1938
Gayakaratra		1941
Gana Kalanidhi		1950
Gayaka Sarvabhouma		1956
Sangita Jyoti		1961
Hony Doctorate	From Columbia University	1964
Gana Kala Prapura	From A.P. Sangeet Academy	1971
Gana Lahari		1981
Sangita Ratnakara		1982
Gana Vidya Parangatha	From H.H. Pushpagiri Swamy	

The multi-faceted artiste had to withdraw from giving concerts when his voice was affected by an accident in 1962. He had trained many and was an authority in pallavi singing. A devout soul, a day prior to his demise, he called his grandson and disciple to sing specially for him '*Sri Raghukula Mandu*' (*Hamsadwani*) as if he felt a call from the Infinite!

\* \* \*

### VEENA VARADAYYA - VEENA ARTISTE:

(1877 - 1952)

Place of birth	:	Cheyaru, Madurantakam taluk.
Parentage	:	Veena Raghavayya - Father Veena Vijaya Varadayya - Grandfather.

Vijaya Varadayya had composed (preliminary) practice songs and swara methods. Veena Ramanujayya and Veena Ethirajayya were ancestors. Varadayya, after the demise of his father in 1888 or so, went over to the pilgrim centre Thiruvadigai and acquired musical skill and knowledge by associating himself with Chidambaram Krishna Ayyar, Tacchur Singaracharyulu and Coimbatore Raghavayya - all celebrities. He learnt sanskrit and telugu and took interest in Dikshitar kritis. He established contacts with religious and political leaders. Composed the varnam *Imthichekka Tanamu* (*Ananda Bhairavi - Adi*) when requested to do so on the spot at Gadwal (Hyderabad).

He was quite appropriately the first veena teacher in the Music College of the Annamalai University. His disciples include his sons R.V. Raghavan and Prof. R.V. Krishnan and Cuddalore Srinivasa Ayyangar.

Varadayya had composed about twenty varnams and fifty kritis under the signature 'Adhikapura Vasa' after the name of the presiding deity of Tiruvadigai. His father Vijaya Varadayya's compositions include the *Sapta Tala Alankaradhi Swara Sahityam 'Hari Charanamula'*. Included in *Balar Isai* Malar of the Music Academy. The artistes are descendants of Bobbili Kesavayya and have been popular artistes.

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**VARAHAPPA DIKSHIT PANDIT - MUSICIAN :****(1795 - 1869)**

Father & Guru : Ramaswamayya, Vina Vidwan & Tanjore Court official.  
 Post held : Commander-in-Chief of the Tanjore Native Regiment  
 under Sarabhoji II and Shivaji II  
 Was associated with the Library and was in charge of  
 Arts.

He learnt vina and piano, mastered english, Western music and violin play too. Varahappa was called 'Darbar Pakshi'. There is a choultry in his name to feed children and travellers on the northern bank of River Vadavar at Tanjore. Dr. S. Seetha says that eminent vainikas like Tsallagali Viraraghavayya, Tsallagali Gopalayya and Dasavadyam Krishnayya belonged to his family. His disciples included Sri Ramayya Dikshit, Parameswara Bhagavatar, Lakshmana Gosayee and Parameshwara Gosayee. The hands that wielded the gun handled books and musical instruments also and Pandit was Commander-in-Chief for the regulars and the artistes too!

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**M.V. VARAHASWAMI - GOTTUVADYAM ARTISTE:****(b.1920)**

Father : Mysore Srinivasa Varadachariar.

Varahaswami started on his musical training in his fifteenth year and made his debut in 1957 at Bangalore. He was a very prominent gottuvadyam vidwan in Karnataka like Budalur Krishnamurti Sastri in Tamil Nadu. Was having wide practice. He taught gottuvadyam through the All India Radio too in 1942 !

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**MYSORE VASUDEVACHARYA - THE COMPLETE MUSICIAN:****(May 28, 1865 - May 17, 1961)**

'A Garland' carries at pages 403-404 biographical particulars of Vasudevacharya. Great men sometimes indulge in absurdities probably in moments they discard the shackles of constraint and decorum driven by an oppressive feeling of having to submit to life-long self-discipline. It is a passing backlash or phase from maturity to immaturity, from adult to childhood. In the biography of Bidaram Krishnappa, mention has been made of the failure of Krishnappa and Vasudevacharya to admit before their patron Maharajah of Mysore of their ignorance of the song 'Mahishasuramardini' (Narayani) and how the shrewd ruler exposed it with grace. After his scintillating concert at Coimbatore, in a strange quirk of mischief, Seshanna told the audience that Vasudeva was a great vidwan who sang admirably. Failing to catch the joke behind the remark, Vasudevacharya started singing and brought copious ridicule on his head and was forced to wind up too. That was a watershed in his life.

'I hung down my head in shame. Seshanna was bubbling with laughter. I felt hot and angry. I decided to switch over from sangeetha to sahitya to establish myself as a sahitya vidwan at least. *Extempore* I composed a sanskrit verse and recited it. Some spoke words of encouragement. The host honoured me. Seshanna stared at me! 'It did not stop at that. Later arguments and counter-arguments developed between us on meeting my travel expenses. Under a sacred aswatha tree on roadside, we quarrelled and a crowd gathered.'

What happened is narrated by Vasudeva thus:

"Finally an elderly person settled it that Seshanna was to bear the charges one way. The earlier ridicule hurt me deeply. I requested Seshanna to accept me as a disciple.

'You and music are poles apart.  
You are fond of eating. Eat nicely and feel contented.'

Finally he yielded subject to a bet. Seshanna was travelling in the second class and I by the third. At each stop, I should go to him, learn a few avertana of '*Chalamelara*' *Sankarabharana* - Ata tala varna and go back to my carriage to memorise. At Bangalore Station I sang the whole piece without blemish. Seshanna broke down.

'Acharya, I apologise to you. Forgive me. I had the conceit to think that I alone could master a varna in a day. Believe me honestly, when my days are over, my place shall be yours!'

Mischief, ridicule and quarrel gave place to ecstatic affability between (Adi) Sesha and Vasudeva!

Vasudevacharya's description of his gurukulavasa with Patnam Subramania Ayyar is highly revealing. Here it is :

'The guru had two sishtyas, Parameswariah and Kempegowda. My share of the duties was to wash Guruji's and his wife's clothes in the river, to wash the copper pots and store drinking water in them, to wash the pooja utensils, to make the bed for guruji and press his feet till he fell asleep. By nature I was lazy but became used to the chores. Occasionally I had to go with Kempegowda to take cattle for grazing. Guruji had not commenced teaching me though some months had gone by. I was to get up and provide tambura sruti for his sadhaka, to listen attentively when he taught Parameswariah, to be with Guruji when he was composing and go with him for concerts.'

One day, Guruji said, 'Vasu, don't think I am not aware of your desire to learn. Do not feel that you have spent all your time in vain. The benefit of careful and constant listening can hardly be exaggerated.'

Thus satisfying Vasu of his intentions, he clarified:

'I have now taken you round the corridors of the temple (of music). All that remains to be done is to take you to the *sanctum sanctorum* and show you the *moola vigraha*. That I will do tomorrow!' (That was gurukulavasa!)

It was a rain of nectar on a hillock of sugar to young Vasu! Here is a parallel from Yehudi Menuhin giving an account of his violin master Georges Enesco:

"A lesson was an inspiration, not a stage reached in the course of instruction. It was the **making of music**. What I received from him was the note transformed into vital message, the phrase given shape and meaning, the structure of music made vivid."

\* \* \*

### **NEYYATINKARA VASUDEVAN - VOCALIST:**

**(20th Century)**

Born at Neyyatinkara near Travancore, Vasudevan obtained the diplomas 'Ganabhushanam' and 'Sangita Vidwan' from Swati Tirunal Music Academy and has been honoured with the President's and other medals. In 1970, he took up specialised training under Ramnad Krishnan.

During 1964-1974, he was Assistant Professor, RLV Music Academy, Tirupunithura and joined the All India Radio as Staff Artiste in 1974. Has been giving performances in sabhas and elsewhere.

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### **R. VEDAVALLI - VOCALIST & PEDAGOGUE:**

**(b.November 9, 1935)**

The vocalist-pedagogue R. Vedavalli is a picture of guru-bhakti and she struggles to get at many more superlatives to describe the merits, expertise and eminence of her gurus, Sangita Kalanidhis Srirangam Ayyangar of Madura Brothers and Mudicondan Venkatarama Ayyar. She claims that she was highly fortunate in getting these stalwarts as her masters. On the demise of brother Srinivasa Ayyangar, Srirangam Ayyangar gave up concerts and settled at Mannargudi to give tuitions only. 'He would come in his self-driven single bullock cart. On hearing me sing during his tuitions in a nearby house, he took me as a disciple. Certainly he did it not for money. He was a great man and he took a liking for me, then aged seven years only and for my voice. He went to the extent of purchasing a harmonium for me and started his lessons on an auspicious day. When I think of him, I feel spiritual exhilaration. He would not like the lessons to be reduced to writing. All was oral.' This is her account of the first stage (upto varnam) of her training.

As her father Ramaswamy Ayyangar was transferred to Madras, she took her tuitions for a short while under one Naganatha Ayyar. Then commenced during 1949-50 an enduring glorious study under Sangita Kalanidhi Mudicondan Venkatarama Ayyar, who just then went over to Madras to join as the Vice Principal of the Music College run by the Music Academy. Vedavalli joined the one year diploma course. She used to go to Venkatarama Ayyar's residence also regularly for training. She continued it with a scholarship she got. From 9 a.m.

to 8 p.m., she would be with him, follow him to concerts and even assist him in classes. It was gurukulavasa in content and effect. He would present her with knotty problems along with lessons and instructions like

*'Viralil ponai, kural pogum.'*

(If you concentrate on beats, melody will be lost.)

*'Sangeetham first; sahitya next.'*

(Melody first, lyrics next)

*Kathiri chedi kattai thattuvadu pol*

*nirkakkoodadhu.'*

(Like the development of stumps in brinjal plant, stagnation should not develop in music.)

*'Follow my advice and not my practice.'*

Both her gurus were laya experts and pallavi specialists. 'Venkatarama Ayyar was an Ocean of Musical Wisdom', says she.

Vedavalli was born at Rajamannargudi. With her rich training, she joined the teaching staff of the Music College of the Music Academy in 1968 *vice* Jayamma. After thirteen years, she joined the Central College of Carnatic Music, Madras and continues.

Among her disciples, she mentions Ramani. AIR Vainika, Abhiramasundari and Catherine, a dedicated and successful French student. She was Preceptor under the Government of India Scheme for Scholarships. She states that alankaram in upper octave and swarajati were not taught in yester decades and that gamakas were imbibed by following the guru. A successful teacher with mature scholarship, Vedavalli combines dignified rendition with emotive music.

### Honours and Titles:

Certificate of Merit & T.T.K. Award from the Music Academy, Madras.

Sangita Choodamani from Sri Krishna Gana Sabha (1985)

Gana Kala Bharati from Narada Gana Sabha, Karur (1992)

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### M.L. VEERABHADRIAH - PERCUSSIONIST/PEDAGOGUE:

(1914 - April 16, 1989)

A distinguished percussionist, he was Lecturer for Mridangam in Bangalore University. He was honoured with the Karnataka Sangeeta Nritya Academy Award and the title of Gana Kala Bhushan by the Karnataka Gana Parishat.

\* \* \*

Born at                      Madras,  
of                                M.K. Krishnakunjaram Ayyar and Bhagirati Ammal.

### **Titles and Honours:**

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Place of birth	:	Tiruvalangadu, Tanjore district. The village has a good musical past.
Parents	:	Sankaranarayana Vajpeyar & Nagalakshmi Ammal.
Musical training under	:	Tiruvalangadu Sundaresa Ayyar, an eminent violinist Umayalpuram Swaminatha Ayyar, a Sangita Kalanidhi. Turaiyur Rajagopala Sarma and Madurai Mani Ayyar, a Sangita Kalanidhi (1939 onwards).
Debut	:	April 1945 at Mayavaram with his guru Sundaresa Ayyar on violin and Kuttalam Sivavadivel Pillai on mridangam.

From 1940 to 1969, he was providing voice support to his guru and relative, Madurai Mani Ayyar and later was giving concerts on the All India Radio and sabhas. Since 1986, he has stopped giving concerts. T.V. Sankaranarayanan, the popular vocalist now, is his son. Vembu Ayyar is literally a link between Mani Ayyar, the colossus and Sankaranarayanan, the maestro-in-the-making.

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### **VENRIMALAI KAVIRAYAR - COMPOSER: (1624 - 1682)**

Kavirayar had composed the Tiruchendur Sthala Puranam in 899 verses. When Vadamalaiyappa Pillayan, a chief under Tirumalai Nayakar recovered the icon of Muruga from the sea, Venrimalai Kavirayar composed a song in raga *Madhyamavati* starting with the lines, '*Eppodhu Devareer Ezhundaruliyadhu...*' giving the date of restoration as 1654 A.D. (When the idol of Rama was lost, Tyagaraja is reputed to have sung the piece *Nenendu Vetukutura – Harikambhoji*, meaning O! Hari, where can I search for you? Tyagaraja's is before the recovery of the idol while Kavirayar's relates to post-recovery.)

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### **KOLANKA VENKATARAJU - MRIDANGA ARTISTE: (b. 1908)**

Born in a family of musicians, Venkataraju had his training in percussion under his father Pedda Ramaswamy and Kakinada Muramalla Gopalaswamy. His grandfather Venkayee was also a mridangist. Started accompanying Dwaram Venkataswamy Naidu and taught mridangam at the Music College, Vizianagaram for eleven years. He was on the Audition Board, All India Radio.

#### **Honours and Titles:**

Award	From Andhra Pradesh Sangita Nataka Academy	
Certificate of Merit	From the Music Academy, Madras in	1975
Award	From the Sangit Natak Akademy, Delhi in	1979
Sapthagiri Sangita		
Vidwan Mani	From the Tyagaraja Trust, Tirupati in	1992.

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### **KUNDRAKUDI VENKATARAMA AYYAR - VOCALIST: (19th Century)**

'Majestic gamaka-laden voice with perfect sruti and laya' marked the rendition of Kundrakudi Venkatarama Ayyar who came of a musical family. Lived at Sivaganga. Had his musical training under his father, Subba Ayyar. He had choreographed many songs including those of Vedanayagam Pillai, the well-known tamil poet- scholar-Munsif. Ayyar's rendition is praised in lavish terms by Kaviyogi Suddhananda Bharati. His daughter, Balambal was in the All India Radio, Madras. Sangita Nataka Sabha had honoured him.

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## **TINNIYAM VENKATARAMA AYYAR - MRIDANGIST & VOCALIST: (1900 -)**

Was born at Tinniyam village, Tiruchirapalli district, of Vaidyanatha Sastrigal. Had his training in mridangam and vocal under Tinniyam Sethurama Ayyar. Venkatarama Ayyar had special training under Tiruvaaiyaru Subramania Ayyar in laya intricacies. Made his debut in 1912 and has accompanied all prominent musicians. Ayyar earned the unique distinction of being both a vocalist and a mridangist (now T.V. Gopalakrishnan enjoys the privilege) and was honoured with a Certificate of Merit in 1959 by the Music Academy. He had shaped the destinies of many young aspirants. Was a very accomplished, competent artiste. Commended respect for his deft fingering, purity of rhythm and tonal creations. His demonstration of *Panchagati Mora* on mridangam before the Experts Committee was very much appreciated.

### **Publications:**

The Art of Playing Mridangam  
Pallavi Ratnamala.

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## **ENNAPADAM VENKATARAMA BHAGAVATAR - VOCALIST & MUSICAL DISCOURSER: (February 21, 1880 -)**

Place of birth	:	Ennapadam in Cochin State.
Parents	:	Padmanabha Ayyar & Sitalakshmi Ammal in a family devoted to the twins music and sanskrit.
Musical training	:	Under his elder brother Ratna giriswara Bhagavatar from his eleventh year and Noorani Parameswara Bhagavatar (Ayya).

The brothers were giving concerts as duo and after the demise of the elder, Venkatarama Bhagavatar was giving solo and musical discourses also. Bhagavatar attended the All India Music Conference at Baroda in 1912 with Veenai Krishnamachariar and others. In earlier years, he had acted as second to musical discourses.

He was giving quite a large number of concerts and was honoured by Kollengode, Cochin, Travancore and Mysore Samasthanams. Was honoured by the Music Academy in 1959 with a Certificate of Merit. Has composed a ragamalika in 108 ragas.

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## MELATTUR VENKATARAMANA SASTRI - NATAKA MELA MAESTRO: (19th Century I half)

Melattur near Tanjore is a fine specimen of a cultured village which has mothered titans like Tsoukam Virabhadrayya, guru to the renowned Ramaswami Dikshitar. Creativity adopted this place for prosperity in the twin arts of music and dance. The extensive flat terrain with lushy surroundings, interwoven and intersected by bunds big and small symbolic of gamaka modulations - pathways and cart-tracks - long and short denoting extensive raga delineations - lend beauty and charm. The green paddy fields in diverse geometric shapes illustrate the variety of compositions like kritis, javalis, tillanas, etc; the serpentine channels ought to have inspired swara prastaras; and the majestic river abutting the village on the north bringing in the rejuvenating waters from the Tanjore-Tiruvaiyaru Belt should signify the great traditions and the boundaries indicated by Lakshana sangeetha.

Sevappa Nayak, Viceroy of Vijayanagar at Tanjore, set up an independent principality thus founding the Nayak Dynasty in 1572. He was succeeded by Acchyutappa and then by Reghunatha (1600 - c.1634), a liberal patron of arts and literature. He granted Melattur as inam to 501 brahmins with the specific intention of promoting art. That led to the birth of the distinct art of Nataka Mela which is celebrated annually there. It is neither a drama nor bharatanatya, nor musical concert nor discourse. It is a combination of all well-balanced by hereditary artistes and enacted.

If *Bhama Kalapam* is the sheet anchor of *Kuchipudi*, '*Prahlada Charitram*' is the prize-play of Nataka Mela of Melattur. This and nine others like Rukmini Kalyanam, Harischandra, etc., were composed by Venkataramana Sastri. The dance drama he introduced based on puranic themes combined the grace and aesthetics of bhava, raga and tala, the three essentials of sangeetha. Sastri was playwright, choreographer, trainer, director and manager of the group which performed. His plays were all in telugu and sanskrit. Markandeya Charitram, Dhruva Charitram and Sita Kalyanam are among the natakas Venkataramana Sastri composed.

Subbarama Dikshitar in his *Sangita Sampradaya Pradarsini* says that Sastri was eminent in composing in *kaisiki riti*, the most graceful of the styles of composing. Dr.V. Raghavan says that the sampradaya of *Useni swarajati* goes back ultimately to Sastri and that the particular line of creativity was important for *yakshagana*. In the natakas, rakti ragas have been mostly used. It is seen that Sastri was attracted by and laid stress on youth, the creative period as is seen from his selection of Prahlada, Markandeya, Dhruva, Sita and Rukmini for his themes. After all he was moulding the youth of the area for *dramatis personae* and no wonder, he felt in tune with the 'Spirit of Youth - the Eternal Youth of Music and Dance'. The Mela is held during the Narasimha Jayanti at

Melattur and very occasionally at Saliyamangalam, Uthukadu, Nallur and Thepperumanallur. Uthukadu gave its Venkatasubba Ayyar of Krishna Gana fame and the last village gave a 'Sivan', the symbol of charity who fed millions of hungry people. Saliyamangalam did not follow the dance-dramas of Sastri but those of Bharatam Panchanatha who lived there and wrote his plays in telugu.

Dance-drama has had a hoary antiquity in the Cauvery Delta. Set in *Padyam*(verse) in various metres with descriptive passages, narrative links, dialogues and songs, the dramas present the characters dancing and gesturing to bring out the emotions and meaning. They are enacted in the open in the street near the temple. The audience occupy house-steps, pials and the open. ( I had done it in 1961.)The happy wedding of story with narration, music, dance and exposition was the delight of the area though in recent decades, the interest is less due to the presence of more sophisticated modern avenues for entertainment. The organisers have made minor improvements to suit the challenge of the times. Probably ladies too are likely to be enlisted to play female roles. It is to the credit of Sastri that his nataka melas are still held in spite of the aggressive counter-pulls facing them.

Venkataramana Sastri was the son of Gopala Krishna Raya and a disciple of Lakshmanarya. A great composer, vocalist, sarangi player, actor(lady role) and a contemporary of Tyagaraja, Sastri is one of the luminaries of the Golden Age of Carnatic music.

\* \* \*

**SONTI VENKATARAMANIAH - EMINENT VOCALIST: (18th century)**

Sonti Venkatasubbiah was an eminent vocalist and composer who adorned the court at Tanjore with distinction and fame. His son Venkataramaniah was equally a distinguished vidwan and was guru to Tyagaraja. Mysore Vasudevacharya records a narration of Vina Subbanna that on hearing the arrival of Sonti Venkataramaniah , the Mysore Palace Vidwan and Counsellor Venkatasubbiah, son of Kuppiah received him at the door and requested him to sing *Dwijavanti* raga. Visitor Venkataramaniah picked up his tambura suddenly and walked out to come back a year later and give a thrilling rendition in *Dwijawanti*. The captivated Venkatasubbiah ran to the palace and fetched Mummadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar the ruler to hear the fascinating rendition, which he thought was for royalty and gods to hear. The generous king retained Venkataramaniah, made him a Court artiste on an honorarium of sixty *Varahas* and maintained him in comfort. He honoured him further with *kanakabhishekam*. It is said that Venkataramaniah's wife performed *sati* when her husband died and sponsor Venkatasubbiah who lived a life of affluence made generous gifts on the occasion of the last rites to Venkataramaniah couple in token of his great respect.

Vasudevacharya further records that during the reign of Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV, the ragalakshana of raga *Atana* came up for discussion. On the issue whether *Antaragandara* was permissible, Vina Seshanna explained that he had been taught a lakshana geetha in *Atana* composed by Venkataramaniah in praise of Venkatasubbiah in which *antaragandhara* had been used and demonstrated it by singing the geetha.

It is unfortunate that fuller details of such stalwarts are not available.

\* \* \*

### **V.K. VENKATARAMANUJAM - VIOLINIST/VOCALIST: (b.1931)**

Son of V.K. Krishna Ayyangar, Venkataramanujam belongs to a musical family. Had his training under his father and then under Thenmatam Varadachariar, T. Krishnaswamidas and Veena Krishnamachariar. Made his debut in his thirteenth year and appeared for the All India Radio in 1950. Had played duo with T.K. Jayarama Ayyar, an eminent violinist. Was Reader in Violin at the University of Benares and there he started a gurukula.

Publication	:	Tyagaraja (in hindi) Sangita Mani Mala.
Honours	:	By the Madras Music Academy in 1984.

Venkataramanujam is noted for the pleasing aesthetic rich tone of his violin play. Has tuned Tulsidas compositions and has composed songs.

\* \* \*

### **T. VENKATA RAO - VEENA ARTISTE: (b. 1905)**

Grandson of the Asthana Vidwan of Mysore, Karigiri Rao and son of Narasinga Rao, Venkata Rao learnt veena from his grandfather and has travelled extensively. His lectures on the science and art of veena play are weighty and he has composed gitas, varnas, kritis, etc.

\* \* \*

### **LAVANI VENKATA RAO - COMPOSER: (19th century middle)**

Author of the famous *Bahattara Mela Ragamalika* in marathi, Venkata Rao was a fine composer and musician. Asthana vidwan in the court of Shivaji II of Tanjore, his *magnum opus* was set to music by Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar, who later composed one in sanskrit to free himself from the cult of '*narastuti*' (praise of man). The *Melaragamalika* uses 72 mela names from *Kanakangi* to *Rasikapriya*.. Vaidyanatha Ayyar has introduced chittaswaras to each section.

Lavani, the word, is described as a variety of folk songs in marathi. Many songs in tamil too have been composed in like style in crisp catchy tunes.

## UTHUKADU VENKATASUBBA AYYAR - COMPOSER & DIVINE: (1700 -1765)

'A *Garland*' presents the biography of this eminent composer of *Krishna Gana* songs and the *Navavarana* kritis. When the Bard of Uthukadu Venkatasubba Ayyar died, Syama Sastri was a child of three years and the other two of the Trinity were yet to be born. Since Venkatasubba Ayyar occupies an unique place in the line of divine minstrels and composers in tamil and sanskrit, a few more facts are presented here.

While his love of Krishna was total and without a parallel, his bhakti for Muruga too is seen to be *non pareil* since he throws open his own sublime heart to Him to provide a warm, human, affectionate abode - the seventh. Having done so, he extols Muruga as '*Or Ezhu Padai Veedu Kanda*' - a lustrous imagination. Having surrendered his heart to Muruga and his soul to Krishna, Ayyar lived a sublimated life of a lofty recluse. 'Rhythmic excellence and soul-filling music of his has all the elements of *bharata natya* like *alarippu*, *sabdas*, *jatiswaram*, *varnam*, *javali*, *tillana-jatis* and *varnamettus* and have therefore become the favourite of dancers', say Alamelu and Seetharaman, scions of the Uthukadu family. Rudrapatnam N.Tyagarajan mentions that the Uthukadu maestro wrote *Rudra Sabdam*, *Nandana Geeta*, *Rajagopala Nityotsavam*, *Kalinga Nartana Prabhavam* and *Sri Krishna Ganam* with a part in kriti form known as *Raasa padam*. No signature has been adopted for his compositions which are all his dedication to his favourite gods. The Oothukadu Venkatakavi Academy, Madras 600 004 constituted in 1988 proposes to propagate his works. The rose faded out long back but its fragrance has crossed the frontiers of his native land 225 years after his lifetime. That is a tribute to his amaranthine songs, their beauty and vitality.

Son of Vadula Ramachandra and Kamala Narayani, Ayyar was born in the month of *Aipasi* (Saptami-Makham star) (October - November) at Mannargudi. He had learnt elementary music from Pooranur Natesa Bhagavata alias Raja Bhagavata and could find none to teach him further and ultimately found his '*manasikha*' guru in the Lord Himself.

'Privilege of a classmate went to Kuchela;  
Fortune smiled on Kalingan to provide the dancing pad;  
Vijayan was favoured for the Bhagavad Gita discourse;  
Sankeertan is reserved for me to hear', he claims.

Needamangalam Krishnamoorti Bhagavata gets the full credit for the propagation and providing notation for the Uthukadu songs. He says that Ayyar was blessed with God vision when singing –

<i>Punal Peru Vellat Tamizh</i>	-	an agavarpa
<i>Idu Oru Thiramamo</i>	-	in <i>Begada</i> and
<i>Kayambu Vannane Nillum</i>	-	in <i>Manirang</i> .

Ayyar has 'followed the kriti pattern of the earlier composers (Purandara Dasa and his elder contemporary Annamacharya) and the kannigal pattern (number of stanzas sung to the same tune) of the *Divya Prabandham* of the earlier Alwars and *sollukattus* and *sahityas* for them are in abundance in his compositions'.  
— (Prof. K.R. Rajagopalan)

Once the Tanjore Court was discussing the merits of raga 'Varunapriya' (24th mela) which is credited with bringing rains. It is said that it should be sung under the jujube (ilandai) tree or at the north-west corridor of a temple or a place south of a vanni tree. Venkatasubba Ayyar was requested to prove the efficacy of the raga. 'Mega Rajumam' is the preliminary raga to attract white clouds. When *Mela Ranjani* raga is sung, the clouds turn black. Rains start and continue as long as the musician sings 'Varunapriya' and the audience stays put enjoying the downpour of melody-induced rains and rain-soaked melody. Ayyar proved it and the ruler was thrilled. Venkatasubba Ayyar was a *Tyagaraja* in life who had sacrificed everything and what could the ruler present him with? Venkatasubba was placed in a palanquin and was taken round the temple with the ruler presenting his broad shoulders to bear it on one side! Krishnamoorti Bhagavatar avers that this unique honour had been extended only to Swami Vivekananda by the Rajah of Jaipur (and the Râjah of Ramanathapuram by drawing the chariot) and a saint honoured likewise by the Rajah of Benares using a palanquin.

Venkatasubba Ayyar went upto the Narmada River with two of his disciples - Pozhagudi Jagannathan and Annavasal Nilakanta Makhi and embraced immortality. Thirty-seven out of his 289 songs have been published with notation and seventy-nine without. His idol is kept in the Uthukadu temple. 'What is now required is, perhaps, a regular annual aradhana.', opines Prof. K.R. Rajagopalan in *Shanmukha*.

The poet, musician and mystic was a life-long celibate. R.Rangaramanuja Ayyangar records that the songs were all preserved in huge bundles of palm leaves lodged in earthen pots and passed on for seven generations among his brothers' families and brought to light only at the dawn of this century. Ayyar is a fragrant link between Purandara Dasa and Kshetragna and the Carnatic Trinity.

\* \* \*

### **S. VENKATASUBBIAH - VIOLINIST:**

**(20th Cent.)**

Son of Sampige Ramayya and Gundamma, Venkatasubbiah learnt violin under Samanna, made his debut in his eighteenth year and had accompanied distinguished top vocalists like Tiger Varadachariar and Vasudevachariar. He is reputed to be highly talented in rendition of kritis and elaboration of ragas.

\* \* \*

**KAVI VENKATASURI SWAMIGAL - COMPOSER:****(1817 - 1889)**

Hailed from Ayyampettai in Tanjore district. A scholar in sanskrit, telugu, marathi and sourashtra and well-versed in music, he was honoured by Shivaji Maharaja of Tanjore with the title of 'Venkata Suri'. A staunch disciple of Wallajahpet Venkataramana Bhagavatar, prime disciple of Tyagaraja, he has authored many works such as —

- i. A sanskrit translation of *Nauka Charitram*. His disciple Salem Puttah Azhagarayyar has translated it into sourashtra.
- ii. Sourashtra *Ramayana* following Arunachala Kavirayar's *Rama Natakam*. This earned him the honorific of 'Sourashtra Kavi Chakravarti'. Prof. Sambamurti says, 'His charming and racy style, his poetic gifts and imagery and his capacity for vivid and colourful portrayal of incidents are all patent in this work'.

Mysore Sadashiva Rao, Sathur Fiddle Kuppaswami Ayyar, Chittoor Kanjira Radhakrishnayyan and his brother Jalra Ramayyar and Rayavelur Pallavi Ellayya (an artist whose pictures are reportedly available) were among his co-pupils in the Wallajahpet line. He preserved for posterity the dates of birth of his guru and of Tyagarajah on a cadjan leaf which helped in determining their periods correctly.

\* \* \*

**YELLA VENKATESWARA RAO - MRIDANGIST:****(20th Century)**

Son of Yella Ramanathan, Venkateswara Rao had his training under Yella Somanna and made his debut at the age of seven. He has provided percussive accompaniment to prominent Hindustani and Carnatic artistes. He is Member, Syllabus Committee, Andhra Pradesh State Technical Education Board and Chief Examiner for Diploma and Certificate candidates. He has been coaching a large number of students.

He has set up a world record of non-stop mridangam play for 26.5 hours. Got the 'Hoso Bunka' Award from Indonesian authorities for his 'Siva Thandavam' and a National Award for his 'Nava Mridanga' concert in pallavi set in various patterns.

\* \* \*

**CHILAKALAPUDI VENKATESWARA SARMA - MUSICIAN:****(1895- - - -)**

Was born at Srikakulam and qualified himself in sanskrit and telugu getting 'Ubhayabasha Praveena' of Andhra University. Venkateswara Sarma worked as telugu pandit for thirty years. A disciple of Parupalli Ramakrishnayya Pantulu, Sarma was giving concerts since the second decade of this century.

Venkateswara Sarma has been a Member, Central Music Audition Board, All India Radio and Examiner in Music for A.P. Government and Andhra University. Was Head of Gurukula, Vijayawada started by Andhra Pradesh Nataka Academy. Has translated standard sanskrit treatises into telugu.

In appreciation of his services, the Music Academy, Madras honoured him with a Certificate of Merit in 1962.

\* \* \*

### **VIBHULANANDHA SWAMIGAL - MUSICOLOGIST: (March 26, 1892 - 1949)**

Was born	:	at Karerumuthur of Mattakalappu, Ceylon,
	:	of Sami Thambiar and Mannammai.
Qualifications	:	B.Sc. (London) Diploma from the Government Engineering College Pandithar of Madurai Tamil Sangham.
Posts held	:	Teacher, St. Michael College, Mattakalappu. Lecturer, St. Patric College. Prof & Head of Department of Tamil, Ceylon University and then Annamalai University (1931-33)

Prior to his initiation and joining the Ramakrishna Mission in 1924, he was known as Mayilvahanar. He started the Arya-Dravida Basha Development Sangham, translated many works including Tagore's *Gitanjali*, edited the prominent journal *Prabhutha Bharata* during 1939-42 and authored '*Matanga Choodamani*' on dramatic tamil and *Yazh Nooi*, a research work of considerable merit.

The ancient Tamils in the South had been sedulously cultivating musical art and yazh was the most prominent instrument though it came to be lost in mediaeval period. Swami Vibhulananda reconstructed Sruthi Veena to explain the old twenty-two srutis.

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### **VIDYARANYA - MUSICOLOGIST AND FOUNDER, VIJAYANAGAR EMPIRE. (1320 - 1380)**

Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Swamigal of Kanchipuram has made the following illuminating allusion to the prestigious achievements of Advaitic Jnanis even after their attaining '*siddhi* in *athmanubhuti*':

'Janaka of Brahadaranyaka and Janaka, Sita's father have been distinguished rulers even after *siddhi*. Adi Sankara, the foremost of advaitis, had not only made extensive tours of Bharath in the short span of his life but had won many an intellectual battle, besides writing bhashyas, grantas, etc., and establishing mutts, temples, etc.



Later Vidyaranya who held sway over one of Sankara's mutts founded and set the Vijayanagar empire on the road to prosperity. Samarth Ramadas was the guide and philosopher to Maharajah Shivaji in founding and developing the Mahratta Empire. Founding the Nayak Dynasty at Tanjore and acting as Prime Minister to the first three rulers of the dynasty was the achievement of the confirmed advait Govinda Dikshitar.'

His Holiness was citing these examples to show that advaitic jnanis were no bone-dry rustic recluses but had been great administrators too.

Vidyaranya was the patron-saint and founder of the Vijayanagar Empire and was minister and teacher to the rulers Harihara and Bukka I. He belonged to the Sringeri Mutt traditions. His exalted eminence is portrayed in a plaque showing him as teacher to the said ruler in the Sankara Mutt at Rameswaram. Had authored many works like '*Panchadasi*' and '*Anubhutiprakasam*' bringing out the essence of Upanishads. With his brother Sayanachariar, he has written commentaries on Vedas also.

His contribution to Carnatic music was equally conspicuous. His work '*Sangita Sara*' was a source of inspiration to later writers. '*Sangita Sudha*' of Reghunatha Nayak specifically acknowledged that it was written after consulting '*Sangita Sara*'. The word 'Vidyaranya' means 'Jungle of Knowledge' and his work means 'The Essence of Music'. It dealt with fifty ragas then in vogue. Its Mela classification was much older than that of '*Swaramela Kalanidhi*'. Fifteen melas are reputed to have been referred to in connection with janaka and janya ragas. Unfortunately the original work either lies embedded in the unreached labyrinths of past scholars now in the hands of unintelligent owners or had been lost.

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**VIDYA SHANKAR - VAINIKA & PEDAGOGUE:**

**(b. Decr. 28, 1919)**

Daughter of C.S. Ayyar, author, musicologist and violinist well known for his scientific approach to the art of music and niece of Sir C.V. Raman, Vidya Shankar is —

a graduate in Arts and Teaching and

a disciple in veena and vocal music of T.S. Sabhesa Ayyar, Madras Sabhapati Ayyar, Syama Sastri (grandson of the Trinity-fame composer) and T.L. Venkatarama Ayyar.

She made her debut in 1935 at Bombay. She is noted for the traditional style, purity of rendition and lucidity of exposition. She has been giving veena concerts over the All India Radio and elsewhere. She has evolved effective methods for

Academy, Madras, which had awarded the Veena Shanmughavadivu Prize her in 1973.

### **Publications:**

The Compositions of Syama Sastri and his Descendants (with gamaka notations).  
 Biography of Syama Sastri (NBTI)  
 The Art and Science of Carnatic Music.

Vidya Shankar had the unique distinction of being trained by a direct descendant of Syama Sastri and naturally is the principal interpreter of Sastri. Her immense musicianship and expertise are in constant demand for lecture-demonstrations, workshops and lectures. She has helped the eminent Dr. V. Raghavan in his research work for two years and has been imparting training in veena, vocal and sanskrit for over four decades with merit and credit. In his foreword to her book *The Art and Science of Carnatic Music* T.S. Parthasarathy has observed:

'Vidya Shankar, eminent vina artiste and musicologist, has an original approach to the problem of srutis and has contributed some original thoughts... has contributed some original thoughts (on) the complex problem of srutis.'

### **Occupation & assignments:**

Kalakshetra, Madras	: Taught music, mathematics and sanskrit	- Two years.
Vidya Mandir Central College of Carnatic Music, Madras	: Taught mathematics and sanskrit	- Two years
	: Taught musicology and music,	- Two years.

Totally devoted to the art and science of Carnatic music, Vidya Shankar is a respected artiste in the musical sphere.

\* \* \*

### **VIJAYA DASA - COMPOSER:**

**(1687 - 1763)**

'So sublime is the spiritual content,  
 So elegant and graceful is the expression,  
 that among the Haridasas, Purandara Dasa and Vijaya Dasa  
 stand prominent as the most distinguished kirtanakaras',

wrote M.V. Krishna Rao. Vijaya Dasa's suladis on diverse themes are famous. He was born at Chikalaparuvu in Raichur district, and as it should be in a poor family.

\* \* \*

**B.S. VIJAYARAGHAVAN - VOCALIST:****(20th Century)**

Vijayaraghavan hails from a musical family based in Shimoga in Karnataka. Grandfather Ramiah was a Palace musician and dancer. Father Seshappa was a musician and the late Devendrappa was his uncle. Vijayaraghavan is Reader in Vocal Music in the University College of Fine Arts, Mysore.

\* \* \*

**N. VIJAY SIVA - VOCALIST:****(b. March 29, 1967)**

Vijay Siva, son of Narayana Siva and Akhila Siva and disciple of Sangita Kalanidhi D.K. Jayaraman, is a prominent rising star in the firmament of Classical Carnatic Music. A graduate from the Vivekananda College, Madras, he had his early lessons in music from his mother, a qualified vocal musician from Carnatic Music College, Madras. Siva is an 'A' grade vocalist with All India Radio. Is a mridangist too having undergone his apprenticeship under Kumbakonam Rajappa Ayyar and Srirangarajapuram Jayaraman. Learnt devotional hymns in tamil from Somasundaram, a disciple of Dhandapani Desikhar. Made his debut in 1974 at a sabha in Pallavaram.

Siva has a high-pitched voice with a fondness for the upper octave and has a keen robust approach to concerts. Has been giving a large number of concerts on the All India Radio, sabhas, etc., and enjoys popularity. Besides, he is a stage and television actor. An active artiste, he is the Founder-Secretary of YACM (Youth Association for Classical Music) for the promotion of young musicians and was connected with Spic-Macay, another association with similar ideals and projections.

Bharat Kalachar, Madras conferred the title of Yuva Kala Bharathi on him in 1988. Siva has won numerous prizes besides getting the Government of India Cultural Scholarship for Vocal Music from 1979 to 1987.

Has given cassette recordings.

To quote the words of his guru D.K. Jayaraman, 'Siva started identifying ragas at the age of seven and started his training under me (DKJ) at ten. At thirteen he began with ragas and started giving concerts at sixteen. Now he is himself a teacher.'

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**LALGUDI J. VIJAYALAKSHMI - VIOLINIST:****(b. April 16, 1966)**

Daughter and disciple of Violin Maestro Lalgudi Jayaraman, Vijayalakshmi commenced her lessons early and had the benefit of listening since childhood to her brother G.J.R. Krishnan and several disciples having their lessons under

her father. It was thus a gurukulavasa for her to listen, imbibe, practise and graduate. Made her debut in 1979 and has accompanied both her father and her brother Krishnan as duo or trio. She has been giving vocal concerts too on the All India Radio. Musical legacy, parental training and immense exposure and practical experience by playing with her father and / or brother have invested her with a flair for confident alluring play to present satisfying classical music.

A post-graduate in English Literature, she has interest in sketching and painting. As is the father, so is the daughter. Vijayalakshmi too has commenced giving vocal concerts at sabhas.

Concert tours :

Trio trips: USSR, UK, Malaysia,  
Singapore and Indonesia.

Duo with brother G.J.R. Krishnan: USA.

\* \* \*

### **GHATAM VILVADRI AYYAR - GHATAM ARTISTE: (1901 - No More)**

Born in a family of experts in percussion and kathakali, of Tiruvilvamalai Subramania Ayyar, Vilvadri Ayyar had his training under his brother Palakudali Parameswara Ayyar. A renowned chanda player, he initially played for the dramas staged by his brother and for harikathas providing mridangam support.

In 1936, he switched over from mridangam to ghatam and became a virtual *upavadya* accompanist for long at all concerts. His play was exhilarating and popular. The Music Academy honoured him with a Certificate of Merit in 1966.

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### **ERODE VISWANATHA AYYAR - VIOLINIST: (1906 - No more)**

Viswanatha Ayyar specialised in pallavi, swaram and neraval. His violin play was soothing and satisfying and the tone he developed was pleasing to hear. Had his training in vocal under his father, Nochur Ramaswami Bhagavatar and violin under Mayavaram Subba Ayyar and Marungapuri Gopala Krishna Ayyar. His father was a disciple of Trivandrum Parameswara Bhagavatar and Talagnayar Somu Bhagavatar. Viswanatha Ayyar was born at Nochur near Palghat and made his debut in 1924.

The Music Academy, Madras honoured him with a Certificate of Merit in 1966.

**T.G. VISWANATHA BHAGAVATAR — VOCALIST:****(Died 1985)**

Father and Guru : Gopalakrishna Bhagavatar, a violinist.

Had further training under Palghat Anantarama Bhagavatar. After training, he became instructor in music in a school for the members of the Cochin royal family. Later he was Professor of Music, Kerala Varma College, Trichur. After retirement he ran a music school at the pilgrim centre of Guruvayur. Was giving concerts on All India Radio and at sabhas. For the first time, he introduced kathakali songs and sopana sangita in concerts. Again for the first time, he recorded a selection of kathakali padas for H.M.V. in 1942. T.V. Gopalakrishnan, Ramani and Vasan are his sons.

\* \* \*

**VITTAL RAMAMURTHY - VIOLINIST: (20th Century)**

Place of birth	:	Nidle - Dharmasthala
Parents	:	K. Subbaraya Hebbar and S. Krishnaveni.
Training in music under :		Hosahalli K. Venkatram, Shimoga T. Rukmini, Violinist. Lalgudi G. Jayaraman.
General qualification & post held	:	B.Com. Working as accountant in a financial concern.
Debut	:	At Sringeri Sharadamba Temple

Ramamurthy has been giving accompaniment to a large number of artistes in sabhas, Radio and Doordarshan. His violin play is sweet and tone attractive.

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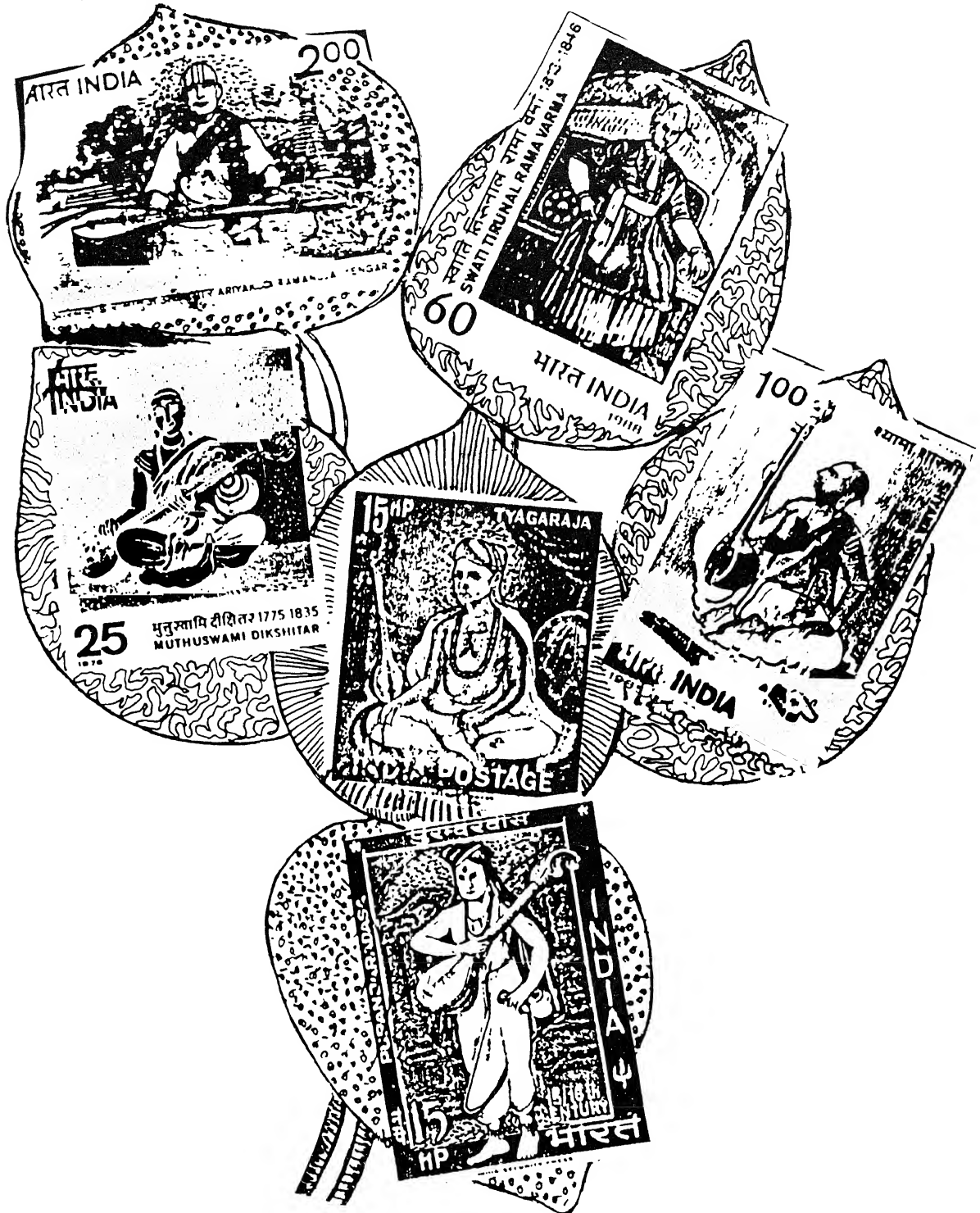
**ROBUST APPROACH**

Dr. N. Ramanathan : Dikshitar brought in shades of Hindustani music. Was Carnatic music inadequate?

Sandhyavandanam Srinivasa Rao : It is not inadequacy of Carnatic music but Dikshitar found, with his intensive training in Hindustani music, that Carnatic music gets enriched by adding shades of the styles of its consanguineous sister and that the ragas thereby bestow greater pleasure while not compromising on their own integrity. While his composition indicates strict adherence to tradition, it is seen that he had a revolutionary instinct in drawing on english tunes and band notes too.

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**COMMEMORATIVE STAMPS TO HONOUR CARNATIC MAESTROS**  
(TRIBUTES BY THE INDIAN POSTS & TELEGRAPHS DEPARTMENT)



## PART III

### CHECKS and BALANCES

‘Bhakti as expressed in Muthuswami Dikshitar’s songs is controlled by jnana ;  
Emotion is subdued and not demonstrative.’

— T.L. Venkatarama Ayyar in *MAM Souvenir* 1956

# A

## GREAT EVENTS, MEMORABLE INCIDENTS AND UNIQUE RECORDS.

### TIRUKURAL:

The Tamil Veda '*Tirukural*', set to music by Mayuram T.R. Viswanatha Sastri, was sung first by vocalist S. Rajam on the All India Radio as other vidwans were disinclined to take the trouble of rehearsing and singing them. Later a two - year serial broadcast of the songs with M.M. Dandapani Desikhar and P.A. Perianayaki took place.

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### INDEX OF SONGS AND RAGAS:

- i. Prof. Gowri Kuppuswami and M. Hariharan have indexed, in their book '*Index of Songs in South Indian Music*', 10014 songs of South India with details of raga, tala, language and author with cross indices. 200 composers, 400 ragas, 10 talas and seven languages are covered.
- ii. Dr. M.N. Dhandapani and D. Pattammal, in their '*Raga Pravaham*', have indexed the arohana and the avarohana with other details of 5000 ragas melakarta - wise.
- iii. B.M. Sundaram has brought out, in his '*Palai Azhi*', a compendium of over 3000 raga scales.
- iv. Violin maestro T.K. Jayarama Ayyar prepared a conspectus but died before publishing it.
- v. Ludwig Pesch has brought out a beautiful pocket guide – *Vide* Part II for details in his biography.
- vi. Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar presented to Umayalpuram Swaminatha Ayyar a manuscript giving the arohana – avarohana of the 72 melakartas and of over 1000 janya ragas, raga lakshana gitams of over three hundred ragas, etc. Perhaps it is available with the descendants !
- vii. Mazharayanandal Subbarama Bhagavatar kept a note-book detailing the 72 melas and 1758 janya ragas with the arohana and the avarohana of each, besides thirty varnas (19 of them rare) and sixteen tamil padas of Mazhavai Chidambara Bharati. *Sangita Kaumudi* of Tiruvaiyaru Subramania Ayyar and *Sangita Swara Prastara Sagaram* of Nathamuni Pandithar are also stated to contain inventories of ragas. etc.



All these could be digested.

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## UNIQUE COLLECTIONS:

- i. V.A.K. Ranga Rao, Madras, a well-known critic and expert in Arts, collected 2500 numbers of 78 rpm gramophone records of vocal instrumental Carnatic songs relating to 1904 – 1974. The collection is remarkable for its unique variety, size and coverage. A colossal effort and a monumental achievement. Does it qualify for an entry in the *Guinness Book of Records*?
- ii. Sampradaya, Madras has built up an archive of taped music of veteran artists for the benefit of music-lovers to hear and enjoy besides doing research.
- iii. S. Rajagopalan, 16 Postal Colony IV Street, Madras 33 has garnered a unique collection of 65 cassettes featuring Palghat Mani, the percussion wizard. Individual artistes have now their own collections. Some have it in their own hands. Yesudas, for instance. 'After 31 years of singing career, I think I have committed a great mistake in not collecting my songs then and there. Yesudas has all the facilities with a separate set - up, the Tarangini. Veena Balachander too had minuted that 'only midway during my veena career it dawned on me that I should collect and preserve'.

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## A WATERSHED:

The Madras (1927) Session of the All India Congress Committee adopted a historic declaration of complete independence as the goal of India (and achieved it two decades later). The All India Music Conference held concurrently decided to found the Music Academy at Madras to promote classical music. The Academy was inaugurated in the autumn of 1928 by Sir C.P. Ramaswami Ayyar and Dr. U. Rama Rao as its Founder-President. Its advent was historic. Dr. Rama Rao was succeeded by K.V. Krishnaswamy Ayyar, T.L. Venkatarama Ayyar, T.S. Rajam, K.R. Sundaram Ayyar and the present President T.T. Vasu.

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## FIRST BOOK:

'*Chembai Selvam*' authored by Ellarvi is probably the first full sketch book of a performing artiste.

— Dr. V. Raghavan

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## TRUTH VINDICATED:

"Why, some may ask me, all this preference for India? But what praise

there be for what has already been so highly praised...I know that in this land lie the wisdom and the ideas beyond dispute. All branches of philosophy are found here. They can speak all the languages of the world. "

Amir Khushro of the thirteenth century records so in his '*Nuh Sipihr*'. His paternal ancestors were Turks and his mother was of Indian origin. His love of India exudes profundity

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## A STRANGE MUSICIAN:

'*A Garland*' carries a life-sketch of Sakharama Rao of Tiruvidaimarudur. He was perhaps the lone musician then handling the rare instrument gottuvadyam; used only hand-woven cloth made out of yarn spun by himself. Surely he takes his rank with Mahatma Gandhi and Vinobha Bhave ! He found facility and time to play badminton too in his day and in that rural village of refined culture and cultured refinement . He accepted concerts only when his purse was empty !

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## GORMANDIZER:

Ramnad (Poochi) Srinivasa Ayyangar, a gracious guru, top-ranking vocalist and a composer of sparkling pieces, enjoyed another reputation too. Mysore Vasudevacharya records:

'Doreswami Ayyangar, the disciple, went in and returned with a huge plate loaded with idlies and a big vessel filled with ghee. He placed before his guru a silver plate on which he **heaped** about twenty-five idlies and literally **poured** ghee over them. Before I could recover from my shock, Poochi had **polished off** the idlies! He then **poured** down his throat hot coffee not from a cup but from a small pot! There was an expression of satisfaction on his face. The breakfast had been as gigantic as his *sadhaka*!'

The guru had his glut; what about the disciples ? Were they starving idle witnesses to the exhibition of gluttony? No. That was the beauty and glory of gurukulavasa. Acharya records:

'When the students also had their share of the idlies, Begada varnam was resumed' (from the point at which idlies had called halt).

The tamil saying is 'If there is no food for the ear, it shall be given for the belly'. Gurukulavasa (and Poochi) took care of both.

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## THE CURTAIN FELL:

Palaces and Courts of rulers and chieftains were epicentres promoting arts. Long before independence, Poet Subrahmania Bharati warned that these pillars of patronage would crumble soon. Here is a specimen of how his warning came true:

' The Mysore Palace **terminates** with effect from May 1, 1959 the services of Mysore Palace Vidwans, viz.,

K. Vasudevachar  
Chintlapalli Venkata Rao  
T. Chowdiah  
N. Chennakesaviah

S.N. Mariappa  
V. Doreswami Iyengar  
R.S. Subramaniam and  
D. Seshappa.'

— A Palace Order.

The artistes were the flowers of fragrance in the Palace Garden of Carnatic Music but the abolition of (royal) privy purses rendered retrenchments inevitable.

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### UNIQUE HONOURS:

- i. Sonti Venkataramanayya (Guru to Tyagaraja) and Pallavi Doraiswamy Ayyar were recipients of '*Gajarahnam*' - elephant riding while Ramaswami Sivan and Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar were brought in procession on the royal chariot by the ruler of Pudukottai.
- ii. Govinda Dikshitar and Vidyananya have shared the throne (*ardha simhasana*) during the minority of the rulers.
- iii. Violinist Rajamanickam Pillai got an elephant as gift for his concert while Violinist Vadivelu of the Tanjore Quartette was presented with an ivory violin by the Travancore ruler.
- iv. Nagaswaram Vaidyanatha Pillai of Chidambaram got a gold nagaswaram from the Vanamamalai Jeer while Kunnakudi Vaidyanathan, violin maestro got a gold violin (200 gms.) from Chief Minister Jayalalitha on March 31, 1992.
- v. The Rajah of Tanjore presented Mysore Kuppiyah with a silver veena inlaid with pearls besides a jaghir.
- vi. The Rajah of Tanjore installed Uthukadu Venkatasubba Ayyar in a palanquin and took him in procession presenting his own shoulders to bear it on one side !

**Note :** Vide pages 484 - 485 of *A Garland* for 'Gold in Music'. Our Olympic Squad might have returned without gold, silver or bronze. But our musicians were not lacking.

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### PIONEERS:

- i. '*Sangita Satsampradaya Dipika*' was the first full-fledged journal totally dedicated to music like *Sruti*, *Shanmukha* and *Sangeetham* (USA).

of a rupee) per page run by A.M. Chinnaswamy Mudaliar of Madras Secretariat and printed by his brother Ayyaswami Mudaliar at Ave Maria Press, Pudupet, Madras. First issue was in July, 1892. Carnatic music theory and songs with notation were featured. It was a labour of love for Mudaliar, a crusader.

- iii. K.V. Srinivasa Ayyangar of the Tiger Brothers brought out a scholarly magazine on the above lines which however died of starvation later. **Strange that journals on music too starve like many of the musicians!**

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## 72 MELAKARTA RAGA COMPOSERS:

Muthuswami Dikshitar  
Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar,  
Koteeswara Ayyar

D. Pattammal,  
Dr. Balamurali Krishna

\* \* \*

## HUMAN BRIDGES:

In the West, Maxim Gorky is described as 'the living bridge between classical and modern literature'. Here are some who have played like roles:

Bharatis of Narimanam and  
Ettayapuram :

Between classical tamil and collo-  
quial tamil for compositions in  
classical Carnatic music.

Uthukadu Venkatasubbier  
Arunachala Kavirayar  
Nilakanta Sivan  
Ghanam Krishnaier  
Gopala Krishna Bharati  
Koteeswara Ayyar  
Papanasam Sivan  
Periaswami Thooran

Between Classical tamil literature  
and classical musical  
compositions in tamil.

Patnam Subramania Ayyar  
Ariyakudi Ramanuja Ayyangar.

Between specialised concerts in  
Carnatic music and kriti-dominated  
present day concerts.

Bala Murali Krishna  
Kunnakudi Vaidyanathan

Between traditional styles of  
rendition and innovative styles.

\* \* \*

## FEE:

Gopala Krishna Bharati took Rs. sixty for each of his harikatha concerts and gave it fully for charity. Madurai Pushpavanam, Vocal Wizard charged high rates and was strict about it. Some of the present stalwarts take hefty sums which were beyond the horizons of imagination or dream of a 'Maha' or a 'Patnam' or Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar. Dr. M.L. Vasanthakumari has said, 'I had never asked for an abnormal fee for my concerts. That attitude I owe to my strict

father'. Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar never bartered for remuneration. In fact, he was against tickets. Tiruvalangadu Sundaresa Ayyar would not take more than the small agreed sum ! So, never had he an occasion to show his teeth, feign a smile and say, 'Oh! It's kind of you.'

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### TITANS' MEDLEY:

Indian National Congress, 1920. Cultural Programme. Eminent C.R. Srinivasa Ayyangar got veteran Naina Pillai for the 6 p.m. - 8 p.m. slot. At Ayyangar's request, Pillai continued. But Pandit Paluskar ascended the stage at the appointed time and started singing '*Raghupati Raghava Rajaram*' as he had been allotted the stage from 8 p.m. Pillai had to vacate the stage with his sidemen to the embarrassment of all.

Ayyangar apologised to Pillai for his mistake. Had Pillai not vacated, it would have been the antithesis of the current jugalbandis or a replica of some legislatures with two and more holding the fort.

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### ALL-INDIA MUSIC CONFERENCES:

1912	at	Tanjore convened by Abraham Pandithar, author of ' <i>Karnamritha Sagaram</i> '.
1916	at	Baroda presided over by the Maharajah Gaekwad of Baroda.
1916	at	Tanjore convened by Abraham Pandithar.
1918	at	Delhi presided over by the Nawab of Rampur, who was also a good musician.
1919	at	Benares presided over by the Maharajah of Benares.
1925	at	Lucknow presided over by Sir William Sinclair, U.P. Governor.
1927	at	Madras which led to the formation of Music Academy.

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### LEAD KINDLY LIGHT :

The book *Prachina Ganam* (Traditional Music) was reviewed by M.S. Ramaswami Ayyar in the journal '*Viveka Chudamani*' which was popular then. The review, reproduced in *Oriental Music* by A.M. Chinnaswami Mudaliar in May 1893 ( a century back), answers questions relevant for ever:

i. Why traditional music was losing its hold ?

Because music was put to bad use and musicians were generally associated with bad conduct. Public began to dislike them.

ii. What was the remedy ?

The one man who had given respect and image to Classical Carnatic

music was Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar. He had seen the heights and depths of the great art. 'Let us follow his path.'

\* \* \*

## VANDALISM:

Vandalism of time and man was the prime reason for the loss of great works. There is a negative aspect to good intentions too. In their anxiety to ensure that a work did not fall into incompetent hands, it was secreted. In due course, it was taken as inalienable. Exclusive possession prevailed over public use and publicity. 'Neither have I any use for it, nor will I give it to others' came to be the short-sighted code. Thus valuable works came to be lost in the personal archives of many homes. Here is the evidence of it.

Subbarama Dikshitar, author of *Sangita Sampradaya Pradarsini* in his letter to the *Hindu* in July 1894 (reproduced in *Oriental Music*) made this appeal :

'As my ancestors have been direct pupils of Venkatamakhin and his grandsons, their works have directly come down to us. Sri Sankaracharya of Kanchi Kamakoti Math, Kumbakonam has favoured me with copies. For checking and comparing, if anyone has old copies of *Chatur Dandi Prakasika*, it may kindly be made available to me.'

Then he recounts very tellingly his experience on this appeal thus:

'One gentleman of Kumbakonam had an old cadjan leaf copy of it. He would not give it but wanted to tear it to shreds and throw them into the holy waters of Cauvery. Only after his death, through the efforts of Sri Sankaracharya, I got it.'

Was it an isolated case ? No, says Dikshitar himself:

'Let me tell you that he was not the only man who wanted to do the like.'

One can appreciate and understand what an amount of patient, tiresome, hard and frustrating labour had been put in by Dikshitar and later by Dr. U.Ve. Swaminatha Ayyar (for tamil works)! A century has passed. A massive search for old works may reveal startling results. H.H. Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swamikal of Kanchi has adverted to this. Why not one of the institutions of repute issue a call for old manuscripts and unpublished works before they fall a prey to white ants?

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## HIS HEART BLED:

"Thrice he assay'd, and thrice, in spite of scorn  
Tears such as angels weep, burst forth "

Milton, *Paradise Lost*.

The steel frame, the mighty casket that enveloped a noble heart which rebelled against slavery, subordination, injustice and ignorance was but a house of butter that melted the minute it saw suffering, poverty and innocence (totally oblivious to and unconscious of being itself a victim of these). In his song on Kannamma the mighty poet, Subrahmania Bharati opens out his heart:

' Un Kannil Neer Vazhindal  
 En Nenjil Udhiram Kottudhadi.  
 (If a tear trickles down thy eye,  
 My heart bleeds. (Says, torrential cascading of blood.)

He knew of no barriers - geographical, race, caste or creed. The passing away of a great soul brought him to tears and he felt honestly that the world - not he or the kith and kin of the deceased alone - stood bereaved.

- i. October 2, 1906 - Oh! What a day and month! The peerless artist with the perfumed brush who brought the splendour and grandeur of the Hindu Pantheon to millions of Indian homes, Raja Ravi Varma (he was not a king or prince in the usual sense) died. The threnody of Bharati includes:

"... ..  
 Beauty He created  
 in the flower, the azure sky,  
 and in the woman's face  
 so that the far-famed Ravi Varma  
 can take it with his great vision,  
 his fancies and his wisdom.

... ..  
 Hast thou to Heaven gone  
 to compare thy handwork  
 direct with the originals?  
 But ill will those damsels \* \* \*  
 compare with your creations!"

\* If Bharati threatens with cascading flow of tears, Dikshitar brings in torrential rains with his 'Varshaya, Varshaya'! and when S. Rajam sings that song there, a cyclone descends!! Is it Ettayapuram culture?

(\*\*\* Celestial nymphs Rambha, Urvashi, etc.)

- ii. Same year, the author of '*Sangita Sampradaya Pradarsini*', Subbarama Dikshitar died. Bharati who respected him for his erudition, nobility and wisdom bemoaned:

' Philanthropy died with Karna  
 Poetry went with Kambar  
 Chivalry disappeared with Arjuna  
 Music ceased with Dikshitar! '

- iii. Great minds react likewise. When Tansen died in 1589 A.D., Akbar and Abul Fazl recorded :

' Tansen's death is the death of the ragas of our music.  
 For centuries there was none like him  
 in the sweetness and skill of the art of music. '

— Akbar (*Akbar Nama*)

' The like of Tansen was not born for several centuries in the past. '

— Abul Fazl - (*Ain-i-Akbari*)

- iv. The revered Apostle of Universal Love, Ramalinga Swamigal expressed his unbounded compassion thus :

' Every time I saw crops withering, I withered too ; as often  
As I saw hungry destitute beggars, I too fainted with hunger :

And the defeat of the meritorious  
Has made me wilt in pain.

**My life must cease when my compassion dies. '**

A wag finds nothing exceptional in this since many a politician often gives vent to such feelings ! Bharatis and Ramalinganars lived as true specimens of what they preached. That is the difference. 'It is the wisdom of crocodiles that shed tears, when they would devour.'  
(Francis Bacon, *Essays*.)

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## HOW MANY NARADAS ?

The divine minstrel, repository of musical excellence, sage Narada was a constant character in earlier films as they were mainly on epic and puranic episodes. The actor taking the role of Narada had to enjoy looks and musical profundity like:

First male vocalist:	G.N. Balasubramaniam	in Bhama Vijayam.
First female vocalist:	M.S. Subbulakshmi	in Savitri.
Balamurali Krishna		in Bhakta Prahlada.
N.C. Vasantakokilam		in Valmiki & Krishna Vijayam.
T. Suryakumari		in Krishna Prema.
P.A. Perianayagi		in Rukmangadham.
B.S. Raja Ayyangar		in Satya Harischandra
Nagercoil K. Mahadevan		in Rambaiyin Kadal, Bhookailas, etc.

Mahadevan came to be the 'Narada with a long tenure covering many films'.

(A list of musicians who distinguished themselves in cine field is given at page 477 of *A Garland*.)

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## TYAGARAJA IN PRINT:

In 1847, the Bard of Tiruvaiyaru attained samadhi. Promptly in 1859, twenty of his songs were included in '*Sangita Sarvartha Sara Sangrahamu*' in telugu by Tirunagari Vina Ramanujayya followed by –

510 songs by Tillatstanam Narasimha Bhagavatar in 1908 in telugu ;

409 songs by Kanchi Maha Vidwan Ramananda Yogi in 1910 in telugu ;

225 songs 'with notation and annotation ensuring purity and expurgating spurious texts' by K.V. Srinivasa Ayyangar in 1922 :



With commentary by Kalluri Veerabhadra Sastri in *Tyagaraja Kirtanalu* in 1948 ;

With classification of songs by Bhamidipati Kameswara Rao alias Hasya Brahma in *Tyagaraja Atmavicharam* ;

550 songs with abstracts of meaning in english by C. Ramanujachariar in his *Spiritual Heritage of Tyagaraja* in 1938 ;

161 Songs with blank verse translation by William J. Jackson in his '*Life and Lyrics*' in 1991 ; and

by E.N. Purushottaman in *Tyagaraja Vaibhavam* in 1992.

– T.S. Parthasarathy.

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### A COMEDY OF ERROR:

The vocalist is elated at getting a concert at Delhi after years. His house throbs with pleasant excitement and activity. The pot of happiness is full when his son arrives from Bombay unexpectedly as the senior vidwan is about to leave. The dutiful son too is elated to learn that after all fortune has smiled on his talented father and with understandable curiosity takes out the Delhi letter from the packed box. **Lo!**

Disillusionment is too sudden, pathetic and excruciating. It is the old letter received years back and that was for the last concert the vidwan has had. The vidwan did not see the date of the old letter that had fallen from an old diary!

To portray the pathetic condition of artistes, this drama was enacted under the direction of the author on February 25, 1966 in the presence of Brahmananda Reddi, the then Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh and a host of dignitaries by the students of the Devasthanam Girls' High School, Rameswaram (of which the author was the Correspondent). It was a delight! The presentation was so crisp and artistic that Brahmananda Reddi was in total exhilaration (brahmananda!) and would not leave, in spite of the repeated promptings of the State Minister till the national anthem was sung ! !

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### VIO-VOCALIST:

SANGITA KALANIDHI PAZHAMANERI SWAMINATHA AYYAR was the only musician to give vocal concerts himself playing violin. (Veena Dhanammal used to sing while playing simultaneously on the veena. Some vainikas sing a few phrases of sahitya.) Perhaps Lagudi Jayaraman may choose to be the second to give voco-violin concert and T.V. Gopalakrishnan a voco - percussion concert. They are competent artistes without doubt.

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## CREATORS THRILLED:

When Kuchela returned from Dwaraka, he could not recognise his own wife who appeared before him as a *Sarvalankara Bhooshitai*. Even so here are a few cases:

- i. Kalakshetra, Madras. Dr. Rukmini Arundale, Karaikudi Sambasiva Ayyar and many other stalwarts were present. Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar took up the popular song '*Brochevarevarura*' (*Khamas*) building 'the edifice with breezy and flashy touches of vivacious and scintillating patterns unfolding the aesthetic beauty of the composition and the artistic appeal of the raga bhava and lakshana'. Composer Vasudevacharya thrilled to ecstasy confessed:

'My composition like a poor girl was given away in marriage years back. When I heard the piece today, I could not believe that it was my girl greeting her poor father after decades as a *Sarvalankara Bhushitai* (lady decked with glittering jewellery of aesthetic grandeur and artistic excellence). I could not identify my own girl on her transformation for a moment !'

– M.D. Ramanathan to M. Sundaresan: '*Shanmukha*'.

The transformation was as much due to the jeweller Viswanatha as to the goldsmith Vasudeva. The hidden beauty of the lyric and the ample scope it provides for nuances were explored to ecstatic heights.

- ii. Likewise Gopala Krishna Bharati sat spellbound right through the musical discourse on '*Nandanar*', his creation, by the brilliant exponent of the art Tanjore Krishna Bhagavata sponsored by District Munsif Vedanayagam Pillai of Mayuram. Thrilled by its intellectual flights, spiritual message and sobering social content, he confessed:

'I wonder whether '*Nandanar*' was ever composed by me!'

Here again the credit goes both to the composer and the discourser.

These are the '**Weddings of Talent**'.

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## AQUILINE PATRONAGE - DIVINE MESSENGER:

In *Nagumomu ganaleni* (*Abheri*), Tyagaraja queries:

'Have your attendants forgotten their duty ?  
Does not Garuda obey your orders and act promptly ? or  
Does he say that the Earth is too far for him from Vaikuntam ?'

Tyagaraja had need to complain. But his bhakta, Nagarathinammal felt no such need! Nor had she any occasion to doubt the efficiency of the Lord's mount Garuda! Daily at 5 p.m., the Garuda came to her house at Madras punctually and took the food given by her - a replica of Tirukazhukundram temple practice! This

is certified to by Mudicondan Venkatarama Ayyar in the *Journal of the M Academy*, 1968.

Service, it is said, to an Apostle has more efficacy than service to the Lord. It was Nagarathinam who built the samadhi of Tyagaraja at Tiruvaiyaru and Garuda's visit is significant.' -

' Taking refuge in Me, they also, may be of a  
sinful birth, attain the Supreme Goal. '

— *Gita IX* -

Was it this message Garuda gave her daily? How apt is the '*Gitopades*. the case of Nagarathinam ?

\* \* \*

## HEAVENS WEPT ?

'I was greatly excited. Azhaganambi Pillai's son agreed to play mridang Tirukodikaval Venkataramayya was the violinist. Apart from the three of us, there was none at Sri Nageswara Temple, Kumbakonam that night. It was pitch dark. To make matters worse, it started raining heavily! The temple priest (probably moved by sympathy) brought an earthen pot to provide ghatam! '

This is the humorous description by Dr. Semmangudi Srinivasa Ayyar of his debut in 1926. He used to say often that favourable stars always guided him. The same stars probably had then reserved his first concert exclusively for Sri Nageswara and his Satellites to have a monopoly of the concert to enjoy!

The veteran announced his retirement from concerts at the Music Academy, Madras in 1992 after sixty-six years' of intensive professional practice. This should find an entry in the *Guinness Book of Records*.

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## PIONEERS FROM FAIR SEX:

Flute	:	Valadi Rukmini and Mayavaram Silk Papa.
Violin	:	Visalakshi Ammal, grandmother of Naina Pillai.
Pallavi rendition:	:	Palani Anjugathammal, mother of Palani Subramania Pillai

\* \* \*

## GRAMAPHONE DISC:

Plate Venkatarama Ayyar acquired the peculiar prefix as he was the first Carnatic vocalist to cut a disc.

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## NAINA'S DETESTATION:

Kanchipuram Naina Pillai detested titles and did not agree to the conferment of the title 'Pallavi Chemmal' by Chidambaram Vaidyanatha Pillai and other admirers.

He detested monetary help even when he was fighting for dear life.

He hated interference, disturbance and requests at his concerts.

He abhorred giving discs even when a heavy amount was arranged for it as he disliked sacred music being exposed at odd places to all and sundry. This dislike or abhorrence was mainly due to music then being fundamentally treated as *nadopasana*. Tiger Varadachariar, Vinjamuri Varadaraja Ayyangar and many others refrained from giving discs only on this score. Sacred hymns, songs and mantras are to be heard only when man is pure and mentally tuned and ready to take it !

He detested concerts *sans* pallavi and one of his concerts for S.G. Kittappa went up to six hours

His second addiction (the first was to music) was to chewing. He was punctual and punctilious in keeping his appointments – a contrast to T.R. Mahalingam. That 'punctuality is the politeness of a prince' is well said. In recognition of the immensity of his services to music, the street he lived in at Kanchipuram is named 'Naina Pillai Street'.

\* \* \*

## NOTORIETY:

The name of Nero (37-68 A.D.) of Rome was synonymous with tyranny and brutality and that shamefaced virtue earned him a prominent place in history. Even so, there was a mridangam artiste, a ruffian, who was feared. Kanchipuram Naina Pillai arrived for Tiruvaiyaru festival with Violinist Malaikottai Govindaswami Pillai. The mridangist pleaded with them to allow him to provide percussion and they were nervous to say 'no'. Konnakol Pakkiri Pillai and Kanjira Pudukkottai Dakshinamurti Pillai tried to salvage the percussive part at the concert. The mridangist, battling with irrelevant play, assuming that the two were side-lining him, shouted at them:

' Oh ! You have both pushed me aside. Alright !

I will play solo now...come on...tala please.'

Lo! It was a command. He entered on playing solo nonchalantly. Completing it he demanded of Naina Pillai to catch up with the first line of the song as is the practice. Pillai had no other go except to do so. Thunderous applauses ensued quite strangely and he shouted:

' Did both of you notice it? Keep this in your mind.

Your men are few, whereas mine are plenty. '

Years later Naina's son Ratnaswami was to give a concert at Tanjore. The

playing for *Simhanandana* tala, Ratnaswami hastened to finish the pallavi. The mridangist told the audience that his long-felt desire to play solo in that tala had to be fulfilled but got out of the platform. 'He started to circumambulate it uttering something incoherently. Now and then he shouted towards Ratnaswami, "carefully...hm...perfect tempo". Finally he decreed to him, "Get up! You have come from Kanchi to show us *Simhanandana* tala as if we do not know that! Beware, no more such business." There was pandemonium all around.

B.M. Sundaram who narrates the incidents has withheld the name of the hero-mridangist. Ruffians do hold society to ransom. They get hero-worship too. The incidents were unique in the annals of Carnatic music..

\* \* \*

### MARATHON VIOLIN RECITAL:

Venue : Sri Padmanabhaswami Temple, Adyar, Madras.

Duration of recital : 3 a.m. on December 19, 1988  
to 8.10 a.m. on December 20, 1988 = 29 hours.

The record was established by A. Kanyakumari, the popular violinist and promoter of 'Vadyalahari' on Vaikunta Ekadesi, the favourite day of Lord Vishnu. She played 140 songs with raga alapana and swaras. The earlier record set by Meera Narayanan on October 30, 1955 of 26 hours of recital at Sri Ratnagiriswaraswamy temple gets relegated to the second place. So, Lord Padmanabha's devotee holds the record now.

\* \* \*

### ALL ABOUT BUTTER:

Eminent scholar Ki.Va. Jagannathan used to dilate on a beautiful pun pregnant with humour. At a lunch in Sri Lanka curd was served to him by the friendly host.

'*Maanangetta Thayir !* ' (Curd that had lost virtue), said he.

The host was shocked and puzzled. Virtue for curd?

' This curd is without *aadai* (cream).

*Aadai ponal maanangettadu thane!*

If *aadai* (dress) is lost, is not virtue lost ? ', clarified Ki.Va. Ja.

*Aadai* in tamil means both cream and dress. The host felt relieved.

Butter has figured in the lives of many even after Lord Krishna. Viswanatha Ayyar had pain in the stomach, Pudukottai Dakshinamurti Pillai went out and returned with a ball of fresh butter to be taken by the vocal maestro. That was the measure of his solicitude. Butter is an Ayurvedic antidote for pain due to heat in the body, a malady not cognised by Allopathy.

Uthukadu Venkatasubba Ayyar, the magnificent composer, was a recluse. The Trustee of the Nidamangalam temple arranged for his food once a day. One day, the trustee was so enchanted and captivated by Ayyar's melody (a community asset) that the trustee-instinct in him asserted itself and the milk of solicitude gathered in him but he could find no way of helping a recluse who is God-conscious. 'In summer', said the Bard, 'practising tanam heats the body. An ounce of butter on such occasions would help my pursuits.' Promptly the trustee ordained that the cart-driver shall wait always with a ball of butter at the cottage door to be handed over whenever required. 'But keep another handful ready. Let the temple cows be blessed.' **The Spirit of India always asserted itself in such deeds.**

\* \* \*

### PERCUSSIONIST:

Be it vocal or instrumental, the percussionist endeavours to bring laurels to the principal and share the credit. Ever alert in body and mind, he watches, studies, analyses the expertise, trend and attitude of the principal every minute and exercises himself to anticipate what the principal would bring in next to mould and synchronise his rhythmic support without discordance. He does not wish to be caught offhand and bowled. Even as the mind of the bharatanatyam artiste stands concentrated and rivetted to the content, bhava and rasa of the song and the supporting rhythm of the percussionist, the mind of the mridangist stands rivetted to the principal musician, be it kriti or swara. Greater the yogic concentration and degree of success of anticipatory support and response, taller is the standing of the percussionist. The percussionist continues to weigh the talents of the principal throughout the concert but the challenge from some of the principals is rather feeble. Few battles of wits are witnessed now.

\* \* \*

### THUNDEROUS CLAP - TO WHOM?

1920. Tyagaraja Aradhana at Tiruvaiyaru. Kanchipuram Naina Pillai was singing with his usual 'Full Bench' of accompanists. (Several giants of old did not know to end their concerts. Their delight was immeasurable if the day did not dawn. Four, five and six hours were nothing to them.) Ariyakudi ought to have been given the stage after two hours of Pillai's concert. And Pillai did not seem to be in a hurry to surrender the stage.

Telegraph Mani, a gadfly who was a terror to those who thwarted discipline, seized the tambura from Villiambakkam Narasimhan, disciple of Pillai and walked away. There was a thunderous clap. R. Rangaramanuja Ayyangar queries, 'Was it for the *coup d'état*, or Pillai's recital that came to a grinding halt or for Ariyakudi who began with *Janaki Ramana*?'

\* \* \*

## LAUDABLE MUSHROOMS:

Fred Allen defined a Committee as 'a group of people who individually can do nothing but as a group decide that nothing can be done.'

But in one of the most sacred tasks, successive committees have proved that collectively too it would decide nothing !

- i. 1947 was the Centenary year of Tyagaraja. Six years ahead, work was started and funds were collected to publish a memorial edition of the Bard's compositions. The editorial committee never met. One dedicated soul ran from post to the pillar for years and brought out a last-minute publication thanks to K. Srinivasan of the '*Hindu*' and of Kalki.
- ii. 1951. The Aradhana Committee elected a body of eleven musicians to bring out a new publication. It was still-born.
- iii. 1952. A Society for the Preservation of Carnatic Music was inaugurated at Madras and it evaporated in the eloquency of the speeches made!

(Source : R.R.A.)

Classical Arts survive notwithstanding pious resolutions and casual action.

\* \* \*

## TEN CRORES TO A CLASSICAL MUSICIAN?

John D. & Catherine T. Mac Arthur Foundation of America has conferred a \$ 3,750,000 (about Rs. ten crores) Fellowship on Ustad Ali Akbar Khan. The sarod maestro is the first Indian musician to be so honoured. He teaches at San Rafael, California and is reputed to have trained about six thousand students there in vocal and instrumental music.

— *Sangeetham*, U.S.A

Carnatic musicians congratulate the cousin-musician on the fabulous honour! Can his schemes and methods be studied ?

\* \* \*

## BHAVA and TEARS:

In his *Entani ne (Mukhari)*, Tyagaraja wonders how he could describe the rare fortune and merit that Sabari had while scores of great spouses of sages had them not! Nedunuri Krishnamurti reminisces how K.R. Sundaram Ayyar, President, Music Academy, Madras shed tears of joy when he sang the song long back true to the bhava of the song and the passionate pathos of the raga in depth at his concert in the Academy.

(*Sruti*)

The musician has assimilated the best of the styles of eminent artistes of the past and while handling *Mukhari*, surely he should have taken a leaf from the style of Musiri Subramania Ayyar. C.V.Narasimhan has recalled, 'How many of us were moved to tears when Ayyar sang *Chinta dirchuta kantha modira*. '

(Vide A Garland page 332)

\* \* \*

## GESTURE:

Recognition by a senior stalwart at a concert is the ideal encouragement to a rising artiste. Nedunuri Krishnamurti (20) was giving a concert at Krishna Gana Sabha, with Lalgudi Jayaraman on violin. 'I gave an elaborate and elegant treatment of *Kapi*. Lalgudi Jayaraman did not choose to take his turn and wanted me to continue. When I asked him, he said, "You had exhausted the raga". My joy knew no bounds on receiving such a compliment from a very great vidwan.' D.K. Jayaraman shortly before his death complimented in liberal terms Balaji, his disciple at the Music Academy during his concert and added that it was his good fortune to get such promising pupils. Such words are of immense worth. For instance, Dame Oliver taught Samuel Johnson to read. As he was going to Oxford later, she came to take leave of him with a present of ginger - bread in the simplicity of her kindness and complimented him that he was **the best scholar she ever had. Long after he was great, Johnson delighted in mentioning this early compliment in his life " adding, with a smile, that 'this was as high a proof of his merit as he could conceive.."**

Boswell has a different appreciation :

' Distant praise, from whatever quarters, is not so delightful as that of a wife whom a man loves and esteems. Her approbation may be said " to come home to his bosom' and being so near, its effect is most sensible and permanent.'

Here, probably no recorded evidence exists. One has to leave the issue to the artistes !

\* \* \*

## THE DIFFERENCE:

'Music has certainly changed - the weighty music of fifty years ago has now given place to styles that are lacking in depth and substance. After hearing a concert in those days, one was so stirred up and moved that one could not get sleep easily. Nowadays, one sees people falling asleep even during the concert.'

— ' Thyagu ' of *Dinamani* in *Dhwani*.

Good sleep conduces health! Musical Therapy!! Eligibility to a doctorate is the issue to be considered!

\* \* \*



## MAHA VAIDYANATHA AYYAR:

The second item at his concerts was always the tamil song '*Ekkalathilum Maravene*' (*Nattakurinji*). His accompanists always sat behind him and not on sides.

– T. Sankaran.

Sulamangalam Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar gives his assessment of Vaidyanatha Ayyar thus:

"Noble ideals. Joint family with his brothers and partition only after his life leaving his income to be shared by them. His voice traversed three octaves. Captivating voice. Dazzling personality. Never touched money. Cordiality, conviviality. Respect to women. Siva bhakti. Respect to elders. Deep knowledge."

(The author pays his obeisance to that great artiste.)

\* \* \*

## THE RASIKA :

i. The concert of Bidaram Krishnappa was on at the residence of Vina Seshanna with the crowd overflowing into the street.

'The artiste having completed '*Todi*' after an elaborate alapana, etc., was about to commence his next item. The prominent rasika sitting just in front of the musician requested Krishnappa to sing in raga '*Todi*' ! Krishnappa who knows the celebrity well said, 'Yes Sir, with pleasure when celebrities like you condescend to listen !' He gave a free alapana and song in a totally different raga and stopped. The honourable gentleman praising the artiste said:

"I have never before listened to such a wonderful rendition. I do not think that I will ever have the good fortune to listen to such a masterly exposition of the raga again !"

It was only after this incident that sabhas started printing hand-bills of the programmes with full details of the songs, ragas, etc.'

– Mysore Vasudevacharya in his '*Nenepugalu*' (Recollections).

Was not the celebrity-rasika correct since he could never have had the opportunity to hear '*Todi*' so sung ?

ii. Nagaswara wizard T.N. Rajarathinam was playing. A prominent person approached him to play a song in a particular language. TNR turned back, gave a feigned blow (feint) to the drone-player (othu) and shouted.,

'Did I not ask you to bring the pipe in that language also ?'

\* \* \*

## HEAVENLY CONSPIRACY ?

A heavenly conspiracy snatched away Maharajapuram Santhanam suddenly from our midst under tragic circumstances, says K.S. Mahadevan. The vocal maestro sought the safe hours of the pre-dawn for travel from Kumbakonam to Madras. Alexer, the driver states that the brakes did not function and there was a crash. Music lost one of its precious jewels. Thank God, neither Ramachandran nor Srinivasan, his sons had accompanied; Santana *Deepika* and Santana *Manjari* (two ragas), the two sons, who have to carry the torch are fortunately safe. Why and how could the brakes fail just at that moment on a good road after dawn is a mystery – a part of the conspiracy.

' Maharajapuram Santhanam was the highest paid vocalist ; he accepted only a select few concerts. His music was a grand alchemy of melody, method and mathematics. A Master of Communication, he took note of the pulse of the audience and enjoyed the best of rapport. ' — Subbudu.

' His later day popularity and charisma were phenomenal. His style contained the essence of other styles. His cultured voice could conjure up an unending variety of musical effects. A golden mean. ' — T.S. Parthasarathy.

'He could marry text with texture ; sang in his melodic voice with imagination, workmanship and sleek presentation and made listeners partake of music's majesty. ' — K.S. Mahadevan

### Aside:

The day after K.S. Mahadevan's report of ' Heavenly Conspiracy ' appeared in the press, I met him at the Sabha Hamsadhwani.

" Mahadevan, have you reported to the police on the alleged conspiracy ? "

" What is there to be reported ? What conspiracy ? "

" Under Section 44 of the Criminal Procedure Code, you ought to have reported your knowledge of the conspiracy which had resulted in the deaths of the maestro and others ! "

" Oh ! I see, the beautiful passage is from Milton ! "

When the news of the accident reached the public, —

"the sound that broke from the crowd, such a groan as I never heard before and desire I may never hear again" (borrowing the description of the fateful occurrence on 30th January, 1649 concerning Charles I).

\* \* \*

## GARLAND OF VIOLENT WEAPONS :

Dr. U.Ve. Swaminatha Ayyar has recorded that Ghanam Padma Singh sang with 64 ( probably one for each of the 64 arts ! ) knives hanging around his neck. That violent appearance and weapons are no threat to melody is substantiated by

two other cases cited by T.C.A. Chinna Singaracharyulu in his book *Gayaka Siddhanjanam*. Tirukundram Ghanam Krishnayya, a composer of tamil kritis and padams used to sing with swords tied around him while Merattur Ganapati Sastri, uncle of the eminent Patnam Subramania Ayyar and a specialist in rhythm and dancing, would sing with swords hanging on him without shaking his head. It is to be noted that the two authorities who have mentioned the cases are men of high repute.

\* \* \*

## **TORT & RETORT :**

Music Academy, Madras. Then the sessions were held behind the Ripon Buildings near Central Station. Ariyakudi Ramanuja Ayyangar listed for the concert did not arrive. Violinist Papa Venkataramiah and Mridangist Pudukottai Dakshinamoorti Pillai, the two stalwarts were present. A search revealed that 'Jagaddodarana' disc fame Bangalore B.S. Raja Ayyangar was present and he took the dais. As Pillai set right the tune of the mridangam to start, Ayyangar said, 'Sruti is not correct.'

'Oom. Sruti is not correct only there', was the quick retort of Pillai. Stung to the quick, Ayyangar felt upset and unsettled and the concert could not settle down to a fine tune and sruti! — (Source : Mannargudi Sambasiva Bhagavatar.)

\* \* \*

## **FEW INSTRUMENTALISTS ARE COMPOSERS !**

Muthuswami Dikshitar was a vainika. Lalgudi Jayaraman is a violinist. Tanjore Quartette were instrumentalists too. There may be a few other instrumentalists who have composed varnams, kritis, tillanas, etc. But the majority have refrained from such exercise. The great master-violinist Yehudi Menuhin had recorded :

'All the great Italian violinists preceding and including Paganini, from Corelli and Vivaldi . . . were composers.'

Why more instrumentalists were / are generally disinclined to take up composing songs in Carnatic fold needs to be analysed.

\* \* \*

## **A RAGA FOR A NIGHT ?**

Only one raga '*Useni*' is handled for the whole night during the Festival of Nataraja at Chidambaram. (Sruti)

\* \* \*

## WIZARD'S PASSION:

Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar would not miss the aradhana (Memorial services) of Tyagaraja at Tiruvaiyaru. His love of the Bard was such that he purchased the old house of the Bard in 1968 and lived in it for over a year till illness necessitated his leaving for Madras. He died on April 4, 1970.

Viswanatha Ayyar was never a greedy man and he would give concerts for the love of music and of friends. Absolutely convivial, pregnant with humour and robust thoughts, he kept stern discipline among his accompanists, who were kept at bay always. Rarely they could take privileges with him and rarely they were allowed to outshine him. Once Pushpavanam did not come and Viswanatha Ayyar, then young, was asked to step in by Harikatha Panchapakesa Sastri. Govindaraja Pillai on violin, Dakshinamoorti Pillai on mridangam secured for Pushpavanam were retained for him though a junior. Pakkiri Pillai, konnakol player, did not like to accompany a junior but was made to take his seat. He was not inclined even to smile at him. Warned about this, Viswanatha Ayyar put forth several swara korvais in *atidurita kala* that Pakkiri Pillai found it difficult to project them, since it was beyond his capability as a konnakol accompanist. Then only, he turned to the junior vocalist and forced out a smile as if to admit, 'so, you are not such a junior as I took you to be'. His music was so totally innovative, intuitive that it was beyond the reach of any disciple to master and so, he had few disciples following him ritually. Once he forgot to sing the charanam part of a song. Son and voice-support Santhanam egged him on to sing it.

‘ Keep quiet ( *Summa Iruda* ), all know the charanam well,  
There is no need to sing it for them !!’

He left it at that. Looks like a Mulla Nasruddin story! A cavalier pure in spirit and action. Admirers loved such antics because of his inherent worth.

\* \* \*

## MARATHON RAGA RENDITION:

Tirukodikaval Krishna Ayyar elaborated *Saveri* raga alone for full four hours with alapana and pallavi at Kakinada, records Prof. P. Sambamurti.

\* \* \*

## PEERS:

‘ The Tanjore Quartette deserve to be honoured as much as the Trinity of Carnatic Music. Their stature as composers is by no means inferior to that of others who have been canonised. Their contribution enlarged the dimensions of our music considerably. ’

— R. Rangaramanuja Ayyangar.

\* \* \*

## POLAGAM SIVAN: SECOND TIME A KUCHELA! :

A picture of humility with a lavish veil on his profound wisdom, musicality, powers of composition and devotion, Papanasam Sivan was one of the eminent Sivan(s) of the South who were reputed vaggeyakaras. Maha Vaidyanatha Sivan, Ramaswami Sivan and Neelakanta Sivan were the other distinguished Sivan(s). He was such a simple and good man that after the conferment of the prestigious title ' Sangita Kalanidhi ' by the Music Academy, Madras, he was left severely alone without anybody attending on him till someone took the trouble of taking him home ! He had at a stage signed contracts for not less than seventy-two pictures involving monetary returns of sumptuous sums. Said Rangaramanuja Ayyangar in 1972:

' He had tasted the sweets of adversity and had realised the benefits of plain living and high thinking. He had now been sucked into a world where he felt entirely out of tune. Ere long, wealth began to cloy... The Lord and his angels pulled him out of the morass and he became the old Bhakta again. He spent all his earnings on renovating the temple and tank at Polagam (his native place) and became Kuchela again. '

\* \* \*

## MANGALA VADYAM:

Nagaswaram was introduced by Nada Nayanar in the thirteenth century. It took for its companion the tavil, well-matched in majesty of sound and power.

— R. Rangaramanuja Ayyangar.

\* \* \*

## APPA'S GENIUS:

' Pudukottai Anna (Mamundia Pillai) is the greatest figure in this century. He and I were listening to Narayanaswami Appa's mridangam for Sarabha Sastriar's flute. The recital over, we all stood up. But Pillai sat like one in a trance. When I pulled him up, he rose and knocked his head against a window. Obviously he was so absorbed in Appa's mridangam that he mistook the window for the doorway ! Such was Appa's genius!!!

— Pudukottai Dakshinamurti Pillai.

Note: Manpoondia (Mamundia) Pillai was a legend and that legend lost himself in Appa's play! [ Scriptures mention that Parameswara was the highest while some extol Vishnu as the Adimoorti. Sometimes, they mention that both Prameswara and Vishnu are functional top deities and that there is ' Ishwar ' who is the supermost and the God Incarnate.] Thus Pillai was great and Appa was great. Greatness is one and supreme and the above episode only establishes the truth.

# B

## DEEDS, THOUGHTS & SAYINGS

### THE GREAT MUSICAL CONTEST:

The chapter on 'Contests and Challenges' in '*A Garland*' details the finest musical combat promoted and presided over by Maharajah Ayilyam Tirunal. The two musicians are described by T. Lakshmana Pillai as two prowling lions, Roman gladiators, musical foundations and musical rockets. Here is his assessment of the two artistes:—

#### Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar

Master of many ragas yet unknown in Travancore. Gifted with a voice unrivalled in clearness and sweetness with capacity for rapid performance.

His method was *nayam* (persuasively soft). His voice lured the audience. A well-laid out garden. A fresh water lagoon. Mellifluous and dazzling.

#### Raghava Ayyar

Could not boast of such merits but had originality, manly vigour and resourcefulness. His voice though somewhat gruff was strong and seemed to suit the boldness and majesty of his style.

His method was *ghanam* (gravity). His voice extracted admiration. A tower of strength. A mighty river. Imposing and sublime.

An eye-witness to the combat, Mridangam Sethurama Rao of Tanjore remarked that Raghava's music contained a little admixture of *Desiya* style compared to the pure Carnatic classicism of Vaidyanatha.

(T.V. Subba Row in *JMAM* 11-2)

\* \* \*

### POSTHUMOUS AWARDS:

If the inveterate Sardar Patel, the Prime Architect of Independent India could suffer recognition only in 1991 for the award of 'Bharat Ratna' after many a lesser dignitary had been honoured, why not Mudicondan Venkatarama Ayyar, the most eligible musician be conferred with a Doctorate and Veena Balachander, the most eligible vainika, with the title of Sangeetha Kalanidhi. Universities and the Music Academy may consider with understanding.

\* \* \*

### METHOD FOR ETERNITY:

" The song would be born as long as a certain understanding of the universe was there. That such an understanding existed and would continue to exist was the concern of the musician-thinkers of early India. In what they wrote, they chose to remind posterity not of their own experience in song, but of the method

whereby the experience could be had by each person. Song is an act of rising above both life and death ! "

– Gopal Sharman.

\* \* \*

## FOUNTAIN OF WISDOM CLARIFIES:

Jagadguru Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati, Senior Sankaracharya of Kanchipuram gave this exposition to Ariyakudi Ramanuja Ayyangar in 1961 during his camp at Devakottai as reported in "Kalki" and 'Sangeetham':

### i. Padacchedam:

Many musicians, who concentrate more on music than on the meaning, distort the meaning and message of songs. The correct meaning of the line '*Guruguhaayaagnana dhvanta savitre*' in '*Sri Subramanyaya namasthe*' (*Kambhoji*) can be got only by breaking up the line as '*Guruguhaaya agnana dhvanta savitre*' which means, 'Obeisance to Guruguha, the sun who dispels the darkness of ignorance'. Some sing this line lengthening the *Guruguhaayaa*' giving the impression that it is a separate word and the rest of the line sounds like '*gnana dhvanta savitre*' which gives the distorted meaning 'the sun dispelling the darkness of wisdom' !

Similarly, in '*Sankaracharyam*' (*Sankarabharanam*), there is a line '*Paramaadvaitha sthapana leelam*', meaning 'He who founded the profound philosophy of "*Advaita*" as an act of play'. But some who either do not understand or care, elongate the word '*Paramaa*' and sing the second word to sound as if '*Dvaita*' is established as an act of play; and thus convert the Advaita Acharya into a Dvaita Acharya'. ( Vide part III D on this subject.)

### ii. Origin of some ragas: *Kambhoji* :

Many know that Kambhojam is Cambodia and that Indian culture has taken roots there. Researchers like Sambamurti deny that India borrowed the raga from Cambodia. Kalidasa in his *Raghuvamsa* mentions another Kambhojam adjoining Himalayas beyond the river Sindhu. Perhaps *Kambhoji* was evolved from a raga peculiar to this region in the Hindukush !

Many ragas may have assumed the names of regions from which they originated. When ragas are refined by the people of particular regions, they acquire the names of those regions. Kedaram refers to the Himalayan region Kedarnath; Gowla to the country 'Godda' or Bengal...

In this connection, it may be stated that the kritis of Dikshitar too would seem to lend credence to the geographical origin of some ragas as in —

- a. Sourashtram - Gokarneswara Pahi kriti - 'worshipped by the kings of Sourashtra, etc..'

- b. Mayamalavagoula - Neelothpalambikayaha - 'outstanding in the regions of Mayapuri, Malavam, Goula.'
- c. Kannada Goula - Neelothpalambikaya - 'who saves the people of Kannada and Goula.'

\* \* \*

## PARALLELS :

- i. 'Sruti follows swara just as the fish swims in water and the bird flies over the sky.'
- 'Naradisiksha'
- ii. Intuitive, imaginative, chaste alapana (exposition and delineation of raga) is compared to the delightful, fanciful flights of the kite and the faithful shadow that follows it.

\* \* \*

## THE BAN and PLATO :

Plato (on Legislation): 'Egyptians were restricted by their laws to fixed melodies and were not free to alter. Our (Greek) legislators are to be praised that they do not venture into this field.' He records further:

'This must be the work of a God or of some divine person'.

How true it is *vis-a-vis* Indian thought and music! The freedom that Indian music has enjoyed lends great credit to our law - givers and merit to our musical seers.

\* \* \*

## MUSIC MARS OR MENDS:

'Exquisite art and degrading corruption were contemporary in Greece as well as in Rome.'

— Dr. Smiles.

'Morality depends on the artist, not on the art.'

— Rev. Haveis.

'Take King Dilipa, the very first king and Agnivarna, the very last king in Kalidasa's *Raghuvamsa*. Both were music-lovers. Independent of music, Dilipa was highly disciplined in morality. His musical knowledge served to steady him in the path of morality. But Agnivarna who neglected to cultivate morality fell into obscene ways that he deservedly suffered from incurable consumption and his body was



" Not always music shows the man; we find  
Who sings kindness is not therefore kind ! "

— (Tagore).

I contend that while it is possible for a person of strong character like Dilipa to derive benefit from music, it is next to impossible for a person versed only in music like Agnivarna to derive any benefit from morality.'

— M.S. Ramaswami Ayyar.

Note: Vide '*Boom, Booze, Doom*' at page 444 of *A Garland*.

— \* \* \*

## ULTIMATE RESPONSIBILITY:

"Tolstoy, in his ascetic recoil against his own handiwork, called art 'a beautiful lie'. Well, it often is so. But it is often quite not so. It can arouse devilish or divine feelings. It can lead men to that higher beauty which Keats saw is one with truth. **Whenever its influence is bad, it is the artiste who is to be blamed, not art.**"

— Paul Brunton.

"The rasikas' love for music has no commercial angle, whereas we (musicians) are being PAID to perform FOR THEM! To us, it is certainly a commercial proposition, a commercial commitment! Hence, from where we sit, they are purer at heart! As a musician your responsibility is to see that, although it is a commercial arrangement, YOU DO NOT MAKE your art COMMERCIAL!"

— Veena Maestro S. Balachander.  
(Emphasis supplied).

' The golden Age comes to men only when they have,  
if only for a moment, forgotten gold. '

— G.K. Chesterton.

\* \* \*

## MUSICAL HAMPDEN!

The prowess of Tansen is legendary. No musician except he was allowed to practise his art in Agra publicly. The ban on others, or rather the relaxation in his favour alone, was to satisfy the fanatic orthodoxy of the Court. Birju Bavare (Baiju Bavara), a co-student of Tansen under Swami Haridas, challenged the decree by singing in the streets and was promptly arrested. He challenged Tansen's alleged invincibility and was given a chance to keep his head by proving his stand.

Birju met Tansen 'in a contest of musicianship fearing nothing from the artiste who had compromised his integrity, diluted his inspiration, a nearness to the soil and climate from which music grew in favour of well-being and the security of the Court. It proved to be a stiff contest. In the end, Tansen had to admit that there was a good deal he could learn from his opponent. A little humility, perhaps.'

Note: Swami Haridas is normally reputed to be Tansen's guru. Abul Fazl of Akbarnamah mentions that Tansen had learnt from Adil Shah ! Perhaps another guru!)

\* \* \*

### VINOBHA BHAVE ON BHARATI:

' This thought that man is the supreme organism, I got from (Subrahmanya) Bharathiar... He felt a sense of kinship with the whole universe, not only human beings and animals, not only living beings but inanimate objects also', said Vinobha Bhave. Vinobhaji repeated Bharathiar's song in tamil alluded by him, meaning:

" The crow and the sparrow are of our tribe ;  
The sea and the hills constitute our crowd. "

— Dr.M. Aram in '*Essays on Bharati*'.

There is, thus, no cause for wonder though Shakespeare marvelled 'Is it not strange that sheeps' guts should bale out souls out of man's bodies ! '.

\* \* \*

### KESAVAYYA'S WIMBLEDON AND WATERLOO:

'Kesavayya's pompous attitude, preposterous titles, his majestic tambura bedecked with flag, the sight of the cartloads of tamburas and other costly presents surrendered by the several defeated musicians, the pile of *jayaprada patras*, i.e., documents signed and delivered by defeated musicians acknowledging their defeat, all these and more made the (palace) vidwans despair of success ...'

(Kesavayya went to Tanjore, the Musical Wimbledon, to complete his Grand Slam but met his Waterloo. *Vide A Garland.*)

A few days later, Kesavayya met Syama Sastri on the street. He gnashed his teeth and said angrily, "You have been responsible for the loss of all my reputation.." Sastri calmly replied, ' This is all of your own making '.

— P. Sambamoorthy in '*Great Composers*'

Note: Tambaram T. Ekambaram, Madras has evolved a method to synchronise the two talas handled by Sastri and Kesavayya i.e., Sarabhanandana (79) and Simhanandana (128) talas with all the beats continuously.

\* \* \*

### VILLAGE TEACHER: THE GLORY HE WAS:

When a political leader pays a visit to his or her old nurse or teacher, it is flashed as news. But not so when others do it?

A humble telugu teacher had given tuitions to Sangita Kalanidhi

D.K. Pattammal in her teens at Kanchipuram. That was ancient story but true. Decades passed. Pattammal had long back stepped into her heydays. One day a man stood at her door-steps looking a picture of humility. When the senior musician enquired, he revealed that it was her old teacher and said that having come to Madras, he wished to meet his old student just to express his happiness.

Pattammal's efforts to make him feel at home were in vain. The old poor teacher was ill at ease before Pattammal whose affability is proverbial. Finally thinking that her father might not have remunerated him adequately, she gave him Rs. Two hundred with ' tamboolam '. The old teacher's face brightened. With visible pleasure he took it but handed the entire plate back to the musician saying,

' Pattamma, I have been watching all along your success. I was too poor to make a presentation to you during your wedding. Kindly purchase a Kanchipuram silk saree for you out of this money as my gift ! '

And he left richer, a picture of contentment !

**That was india's glory!!  
the glory that was or is?**

This reminds me of an incident in January 1948 (the month of the martyrdom of Gandhiji) at Tiruvallur. Padmanabha Ayyar, Deputy Director of Survey was known to be an officer of aggressive honesty. Menon, the Circle Officer gave him with deep respect just two apples on behalf of the trainees while taking leave of the camp. After the usual enquiries Ayyar said,

' Menon, You have your children at Madras. Please give these two apples to them with my love '.

That was Ayyar's unsullied reputation on the eve of his retirement. He was not guilty of taking even those two fruits!! Now the search is on to locate such men of gold!! Gold is scarce even in Kolar Mines!

\* \* \*

## **NIDHI CHALA SUKHAMA?**

The answer of Tyagaraja and other seers of India is known. A sympathetic cord vibrated in Baruch Spinoza, a great Jew, philosopher and a contemporary of Ahobala and Venkatamakhin. In his '*On the Improvement of the Intellect* (1660 AD), he states:

' I could see the many advantages acquired from honours and riches...But the more one possesses, the more the pleasure is increased and the more one is encouraged to increase them; whereas if at any time our hope is frustrated, there arises in us the deepest pain. Fame has also this drawback. But the love towards a thing which is eternal and infinite alone feeds the mind with a pleasure secured from all pain. '

Here is a passage from Vivekananda's letter dated October 2, 1893:

' I sometimes wish for a life of million million ages to serve Him

Bhatruhari's *Vairagya Sataka*, viz., 'We live on alms; and sleep on Mother Earth: What use have we of the Wealthy?', finds an echo in a Chinese song quoted by T.H. Chin in *Kalakshetra* (VII-2):

'By sunrise, I begin to toil;  
Go to rest at sunset;  
Drink by singing a song;  
Eat by ploughing the soil.  
What is the use for me to have imperial power?'

'Poverty has not soured the Indian. It has chastened him with a spirit of acceptance, which is very different from resignation. There is no despair. On the contrary, he has learnt to feel and create beauty in the most adverse conditions, to make his own entertainment and music, to join in dance. Cultural enjoyment has been a great factor in Indian life

– Indira Gandhi in *Eternal India* (B.I. Publications) 1980.

'The performance ... of Mozart made moisture come to the eyes because of the sheer happiness of the music and the incredible accuracy and bloom of the playing. **To hear this music played to perfection was to escape from the material burden of the world for a while.** We could feel for a blissful moment that felicity is the only reality, the Thing-in-Itself. When Mozart is in this heavenly mood it is as though he were saying to us, "A star danced and under it I was born." Yet when the work was composed, Mozart was a harassed mortal man afflicted with responsibilities and griefs which would send the average man of "Big Business", or the average politician, staggering into the nearest nursing home. **The creative spirit in genius seems to owe nothing to the support of the flesh ...'**

– Sir Neville Cardus in *Music*

\* \* \*

## COMPOSITIONS v. LUCK:

South India has a great legacy of preserving and presenting a panorama of enduring and enchanting architectural, sculptural and other art works - rather such a surfeit of them that the intrinsic merit and monumental glory of many get ignored. Gems of purest ray serene in abundance even after the Great Loot of Treasures survive. The Indian starved to create and legate such treasures. Several old magnificent temples stand ignored but small temples are built and no efforts are made to renovate the fine monumental temples of old. Even so, numerous compositions of anonymous composers lay untouched by any! Dr. S. Seetha has recorded:

"There are manuscripts in the Saraswati Mahal Library, Tanjore of padas and kirtanas in Telugu, Sanskrit and Marathi like '*Venkatesa Padamulu*' (99 songs), '*Samskritha Kirthanas*' (147 songs) and '*Vanchinatha Kirthanam*' (49 songs), the authorship of

Some works lack proximate luck and response but enjoy ultimate popular  
A remarkable case is the work '*The World as Will and Idea*' (1818) by philosopher  
Shoepenbauer. Sixteen years after publication, he was told that the great part  
the edition had been sold as waste paper! In 1851 he received ten copies of  
most readable work '*Byproducts and Leavings*' as his remuneration! Good wo  
too have to wait for auspicious stars to claim like Ben Johnson:

**" Thank God !  
It will be look'd for book  
When some but see  
Thy title 'Epigrams' and nam'd of me."**

\* \* \*

## **ORIENTAL EMOTIONS:**

There may be an element of over-reaction or excess in what an Indian do  
feels or thinks. Pure melody with unrestricted freedom for ornamentati  
innovation and improvisation, in short, raga-based music - is thus a corollary o  
Exhibition of oriental joy or sorrow is notorious for their near-riotous nature. Ev  
the Prince among the wise ascetics Swami Vivekananda could not overcome  
See the Himalayan magnitude and magnanimity of his gratitude expressed  
one of his letters - stated to be an adoption of a passage in the *Siva Mahim*  
*Stotram*:

**' If the Indian Ocean were an inkstand, the highest mountain of the Himalay  
the pen, the earth the scroll and time itself the writer, still it will not expre  
my gratitude to you. '**

Verily it is the Viswaroopa of Gratitude! What did Nehru will? He wanted  
ashes to be broadcast on hills,dales and plains! On *Raga - Emotion nexus*, Go  
Sharman refers to exaggerated claims:

**' A long list of ragas is provided with various emotions credited against them somew  
in the fashion of a bank ledger... If this potion were to work in the way it is meant to,  
musician would have to contend with a hall – full of wailing and sobbing spectator  
he were to burst into tears himself halfway...)'**

\* \* \*

## **THE EQUALS:**

The bad musician tortures, no doubt. The good one too tortures ! The gr  
Hindi Poet Tulsidas in his benediction to the translation of the Ramayana said

**' I bow down to both the wicked and the holy.  
Alas, for me they are both equally torturers.  
The wicked begin to torture me as soon as they contact with me.**

Does it not apply to the good musician too when he suddenly springs a surprise with his '*Nee nama rupamulaku nithya jaya mangalam*' (*Sourashtram*)?

\* \* \*

### TSMARTED:

The visiting poet, with supreme confidence, sang his composition expecting approbation and acclaim. The Court-poet, not known much for poetic calibre (evidently a political appointment!), stepped in the minute the visiting poet had concluded and declared that the song was not original and asked his prime pupil to render 'what he had already been taught'. The boy repeated the poet's version *verbatim* to the amazement of all. Not content with it, the court-poet called upon the second disciple to render it; and lo! he did it too!

The visiting poet was struck with fright and felt that it was indeed an assembly hosts! And he left. The story says that the first boy was an *eka santha grahi* the second a *dwi santha grahi*, i.e., those who could repeat on hearing a text once and twice respectively. Scheming Court – poets equip themselves with many tools to keep themselves in position.

Likewise when Paranjoti Munivar took his '*Tiruvilayadal Puranam*' to the learned men of Veppathur to get '*catrukkavi*' (introduction), he was asked to come the next day. The elite sat through the night, wrote another themselves on the lines of Paranjoti's and when the Munivar went over there the next day, warned him that his composition was not original!

Such stories are circulated either to highlight the cerebral brilliance of some or the hazards and impediments faced by a true genius. It is stated that *Tiruvilayadal Kirtanas* were composed almost simultaneously but independently by Mazhavarayanendal Subrahmania Bharati and Tirunayam Krishna Bharati. How they fared in this context is worthwhile a probe.

\* \* \*

### IA v. SWARA:

*Raga gnana* is different from *Swara gnana*. The first is evolved by constant training while the second is developed by one's own instinct, intuition and efforts. Having *swara gnana* need not necessarily have *raga gnana*.

— Nedunuri Krishnamurti

\* \* \*

### HITAR MEMORIAL

The Dikshitar memorial mandap at Ettayapuram was constructed in 1955 renovated and rebuilt in 1988 by Sundaram Pillai of

Palayamkottai. Dikshitar Jayanthi is celebrated annually.

\* \* \*

## VALUE & VALUES:

i. The golden bond and fragrant nexus between the nagaswara colossus T.N. Rajarathinam and *Raga Darbar* are well-known. It was God's chosen hour of rest and recreation — the still, soulful midnight. The maestro was at the peak of his sweet fascinating melody. The congregation in the street — yes, it was a procession — stood in captivated trance and forgot to breathe!

"SABHASH",

chipped in a rustic voice startling the congregation of statues and the maestro. Rajarathinam looked around in amazement. The ill-clad lamp-carrier with his sleepless dozing gas-light on his innocent, uncombed head lowered his head, feeling guilty of impropriety. The maestro in the midst of his *Darbar* (Court! — where he was not holding total sway over the crowd around?) confided:

'I value that appreciation of the *mandai-vilakku* (lamp-carrier) much more than any Presidential Award.'

True, one came from a full, feeling innocent heart while the other out of a conscious procedure. (Samuel Johnson used to recollect with genuine pleasure the praise of his first lady-tutor stating that it was 'as high a proof of his merit as he could conceive'.)

ii. 'Your Sri Ramayana Darshanam is priced too high', complained the youth

'You have gladly parted with Rs.120 for a pair of shoes to cover your feet; I am sure you are not prepared to part with Rs.50 for something to be carried on your head', replied K.V. Puttappa, Jnanapith Award Kannada Poet.

iii. Rusi Modi, Chairman, TISCO told his men (before 1992):

'I have completed fifty years of service...If I had my life to live over again I would change many things but not my life with Tata Steel.'

That was the summit of human involvement and dedication. Surely many stalwart musicians had echoed like-thoughts *vis-a-vis* music.

iv. The divine minstrel Narada's travails in achieving perfection in music find mention at page xLix of *A Garland*. Says Gopal Sharman:

'His erudition has never been questioned. It is the value of erudition that

- v. **Make—believe ?** 'A genuine artiste is never worldly wise. He lives in the world of euphoria generated by public adoration and forgets to invest wisely for a future day. He realises his mistake when it is too late. He has to put on a brave face.. exude a make-believe enthusiasm...' — H.K. Yoganarasimha

\* \* \*

### **MULTI—FACETED:**

Maharajah Chamaraja Wodeyar was a prince among musicians and a musician among princes.

S. Rajam is an artiste among artists and an artist among artistes —(RRA)

Dr. S. Pinakapani is a Sangita Kalanidhi among practising doctors and a doctor of medicine among Sangita Kalanidhis.

T.L. Venkatarama Ayyar was a Supreme Court Judge among musicians and a competent musician among Judges of the Supreme Court.

Vallalar Ramalinga Swamigal, Govinda Dikshitar, Veena Balachander and several others were such multi—faceted celebrities who should have made a success of anyone of half a dozen careers.

\* \* \*

### **PROFESSION & PRACTICE:**

Rarely the two meet. Palghat Mani Ayyar, the percussion maestro, was a lifelong adversary of the mike and his letter paper carried the warning 'Invite me only for mikeless concerts'. It was not like statutory warnings such as "smoking is injurious to health" in glittering advertisements on cigarettes but he meant it.

His Tenth Anniversary was celebrated at Delhi by Swaralaya with all 'technical wizardry demonstration, two monstrous speakers connected to an electronic amplification device, etc.' Rightly 'Narada' wrote that 'a big name from the past is useful to brand the concert series but it would take some imagination to conjure up a link between such spectacles and the maestro in whose name such perfidies are perpetrated'.

\* \* \*

### **CHIEF MINISTER'S SPARKLERS:**

The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Jayalalitha, a talented artiste, gave a brilliant speech at the Madras Music Academy on December 18, 1991. Excerpts below:

'Our musical savants, connoisseurs and rasikas who have contributed to the maintenance of the highest standards of musical excellence had drawn the attention of the whole world to the fact that Indian music and dance forms



represent the highest hall-mark of its culture and civilization and are rooted in the understanding of the power and glory of divinity and its manifestation.'

'The properties of Indian music are spiritual and encompass religion, philosophy, logic, science, commonsense and sensory impressions. It spanned the entire gamut of organic sensation, sense perception, perceptual conception, reasoning, judgment and spiritual realisation.'

'The great contribution of Indian music is the conceptualisation of raga...the vital force in the design and execution of the classical form ... ragas were the creation of divine inspiration of the innermost being of the great Indian spiritual leaders.'

'The pinnacle of development of tamil music was achieved during the time of the Nayanmars and the Alvars. The thevaram hymns could be said to constitute the first regular musical compositions set in definite raga and tala.'

\* \* \*

## DIETETIC MUSICOLOGY:

- i. Musicians fall under two categories, viz,
  - a. those who find music in diet and
  - b. those who find diet in music.

Mahavidwan Minakshisundaram Pillai of Tiruvidaimarudur, after a frugal vegetarian meal at the local Saivite Mutt, confided to young U.Ve. Swaminatha Ayyar, 'They served me ghee'!

A single spoonful ghee was then worth such a startling revelation in whispers by the tamil savant !

- ii. Pazhamaneri Swaminatha Ayyar, a stalwart among musicians, was having his dinner after a concert and *payasya* (sweet pudding) was served spreading aroma alround. Ayyar took a handful of it (not being the custom to use spoons) but suddenly lapsed into sobs and tears. None could fathom the cause. Recovering himself, still with the pudding in hand, he reminisced, tears keeping pace with his thoughts:

'My thoughts went back to my guru Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar who had never tasted any of these rich dishes. He abjured all these to preserve the purity of his voice.'

Patnam Subramania Ayyar told his disciple Mysore Vasudevacharya that 'Maha' was starving himself. Vasudevacharya avers:

'Vaidyanatha Ayyar was afraid that the tiny flame of *mangalarati* was sufficient to cause ... He stuck to a strict diet of rice

### What a sacrifice? Yet Maha did not live to complete his fiftieth year!

- iii. Patnam Subramania Ayyar had told Vasudeva, 'Why on earth should men learn music if one has to starve like Maha?' 'Subramania Ayyar would eat well. I fully endorse his theory. I have been a faithful follower of his take-it-easy life.' Veena Seshanna too had once complimented Vasudeva of his partiality for eating.

Patnam lived for fifty-seven and Vasudevacharya lived for ninety- six years!

- iv. Subramania Bharati was not known to be a glutton and want was not a reason for it. He was in such a hurry that his sparkling advent lasted just for thirty-eight years.
- v. Tyagaraja was a renunciate and Muthuswami Dikshitar was a kshetragna leading a frugal life. The former had aversion even for curds, butter and milk. Both could have commanded luxury. Food played little role in their lives. Dikshitar was just fifty-nine when Ettayapuram bade him a tearful farewell while the Rama Bhakta lived for eighty years.
- vi. Poochi Srinivasa Ayyangar was a glutton who swallowed idlies in dozens, ghee in cups and coffee in jugs. He was only fifty-two when he died.
- vii. As against these and similar cases which offer no guide—lines, 'the Vedic benedictions indicate:

*"Jeevema saradassatam* (Live for 100 sarad-seasons), *"Satamanam bhavati Sataayuh"* (Let it be hundred, hundred years' age) point out that our ancients considered 100 years as the maximum limit of man's age...Tradition mentions *"Sahasra masa Jeevi "* (1000 months old person) and *"Sahasra Poorna Chandra Darsana"* (witnessing 1000 full -moons).' — (S.D.Thirumala Rao).

Ayurveda has guidelines to develop and sustain a melodious voice and enjoy longevity. What exactly is the rhythm between diet and life-span of a musician? What exactly is the concept behind '*mens sana in corpore sano* ' ? What exactly would be the ideal food for a musician to enjoy a fairly long life span ? Is there to be any distinction in food requirements between a vocalist, an instrumentalist (nagaswara artiste or flautist) and a percussionist! Prima facie a case exists for an analysis.

\* \* \*

### MAY I HAVE THE KNOWLEDGE?

'O Lord, please give me the unflinching will, the will that holds against all odds, an unflinching will to change. May I also have the knowledge to know what I can and cannot change, knowledge that helps me to accept what I cannot change.

Once I know something cannot be changed, I can accept it. And once I know I can change, I can do what has to be done. May I have this knowledge?’

— Swami Dayananda Saraswati

**Note : Musicians may adopt this prayer.**

\* \* \*

## **MELODIOUS, NOT SOULFUL:**

‘I have been trying to study the handling of the violin by Western savants to see whether a part of it can be imported into South Indian music. But I must confess that my attempts so far in that direction have not been an unqualified success. For whenever I tried to introduce some innovation during my practice hours, I found that the music lost its distinctive Carnatic stamp. Such music might be melodious to the ear but it has no appeal to the soul.’

— Dwaram Venkataswamy Naidu, Violin maestro in 1941.

(Vide Chapter IV in Part I on ‘Trends & Trends’.)

\* \* \*

## **THE CONTRASTS :**

- i. Subramania Bharati of Ettayapuram could not restrain his emotions at the sight of tears. He confessed :

‘ Un kannil neer vazhindal, en nenjil udhiram kottudhadi.’

Knowing what Bharati stood for, fought for and suffered, one can appreciate Samuel Johnson saying,

‘ The notion of liberty amuses the people of England and helps to keep off the *taedium vitae* (loss of interest in life). When a butcher tells you that his heart bleeds for his country, he has, in fact, no uneasy feeling.’

- ii. How Cardinal Wolsey of England and Mangal Pandey of the First War of Indian Independence (mischievously called the Sepoy Mutiny) faced the gallows nonchalantly is well known. Here is a contrast of the last words of two other great men from the pages of history :

‘ Et tu, Brute ? ’                      -            The plaintive query of Julius Caesar.

‘ He Ram ’                                -            Thus Mahatma Gandhiji surrendered his soul and body to the Lord.

Even the Golden Deer Maricha chose to utter the name of the Lord only as his life ended. It is on record that many musicians breathed their last singing or being sung to in praise of the Lord. Do they not portray the respective civilization and culture they represented ?

**WOE:**

Samuel Johnson at Pembroke College in 1754. The master received him coldly. Johnson at least expected that the master would order for a copy of his Dictionary but the master did not even choose to talk on the subject. Johnson said to me, —

" There lives a man who lives by the revenues of literature and  
will not move a finger to support it. " — Boswell

Worthy men had thus been treated very many times and worthy causes ignored. Boswell was to Johnson what Mahadev Desai was to Gandhiji, Umayalpuram Brothers were to Tyagaraja and Purandara's sons were to the Sangita Pitamaha.

\* \* \*

**THE PAINFUL VOID**

Telegrams and congratulations from famous persons were read out at the 70th birthday dinner of Sir Thomas Beecham amidst immense applause. Sir Thomas Beecham asked, with a pained expression on his face,

**"Nothing from Mozart ?"**

— Sir Neville Cardus in '*Music*'.

\* \* \*

**SRINGARA**

The young musician used to bring a beautiful flask to his concerts. He would be frequently sipping from the cup and seen fully animated and rejuvenated. His dear spouse could not fathom the reason for his taking it empty and bringing it back unused. It was intriguing. That day, it happened to be the concert at the Ladies' Club and she was prominently seated in the auditorium. She could see him taking rhythmic sips from the empty cup. Driven by an acute feeling of anguish and solicitude, she procured coffee, took it to him and whispered :

'My heart aches to see you sipping that empty cup.  
I feel like crying. Here is coffee, dear. Please ...'

'Radha dear, you know I don't take coffee at all. This flask is now part of the musician's paraphernalia. It serves me most elegantly. When I sip this reddish cup I feel I am kissing your rosy lips, dear. How can this pale liquid provide or compensate that exhilaration.'

The *viyoga* mind becomes *samyoga* indeed !

\* \* \*

## C

## APHORISMS, EPIGRAMS, ETC.

## LEAD KINDLY LIGHT: GOLDEN GUIDELINES:

‘Music is a kind of inarticulate, unfathomable speech which leads us to the edge of the Infinite and lets us for "moment's gaze into that ".’

— Carlyle.

‘The relationship between Sound and Sense (Sound and Word) is a holy one and is similar to that of Parvati and Parameswara.’  
(*Vakarthaviva ... Parameswarau.*)

— Kalidasa's '*Raghuvamsa*'.

‘A great musician must always use emotion as *substance* out of which beautiful forms are created. A great musician should have poise for without it his work perishes.’

‘We praise the composer for his genius in creating a foundation along with a superstructure of melodies. But we expect for the player his own skill in the creation of varieties of melodic flourish and ornamentations.’

— Rabhindranath Tagore.

‘Music students are among the least politicised in the world.’

— John McCabe in *Musical Times*.

(Thank God ! May the devotees of melody keep it up.)

‘Believe me, I shall be composing love-songs again – addressed not to A or B but to Music.’

— Brahms

\* \* \*

## SUSTAINED PRACTICE:

‘I practise faithfully everyday.  
If I miss it one day, I notice it.  
If I miss it on two days, critics notice it.  
If I miss it on three days, audience notice it.’

— Paderewski.

In '*A Garland*' the dedicated intensive daily practice of stalwarts like Konerirajapuram Vaidyanatha Ayyar, Tirukkodikaval Krishna Ayyar, Dwaram Venkataswami Naidu, Sir Yehudi Menuhin, etc. is dealt with *in extenso*.

\* \* \*

## TERMINOLOGICAL EXACTITUDE:

B. Mathews:

' In the case of the first man to use an anecdote, it is originality ;  
In the case of the second, there is plagiarism ;  
With the third, it is lack of originality ; and  
With the fourth, it is drawing from common stock. '

N.M. Butler: ' Yes; and in the case of the fifth, it is research. '

— From Edmund Fuller's *Anecdotes*

\* \* \*

## MUSIC MANDATORY:

Plato insisted on a knowledge of music and mathematics for admission into his school. Pythagoras insisted that a pupil should know geometry and music.

' Music gives a soul to the universe,  
wings to the mind,  
flight to the imagination,  
a charm to sadness and  
gaiety and life to everything.

It is the essence of order; leads to all that is Good, Just and Beautiful. '

— Plato.

Note: 1. The combination of mathematics and music and its utility may be canvassed in depth.

2. The Government of Tamil Nadu is in favour of prescribing music as a compulsory subject, it is reported.

\* \* \*

## REASON FOR MYSTERY:

The lives of many stalwarts of Art, Music and Culture are shrouded in mystery. The exact period of the revered Sadasiva Brahmendral and Arungirinathar, the year of birth of Tansën and Gopalakrishna Bharati, the place of birth of Jayadeva and Kshetragna, to mention a few, are unresolved issues. Taking the pregnant life of Arungirinathar, his parentage is given variously as Subbarama Dikshitar-Kamalambal, Rajanadha Kavi-Abhiramanayaki, as son of the sister of Govinda Dikshitar, etc. All are robustious surmises. His period is given differently as 1375 — 1450, 1400 — 1490, born in 1571, etc. The caste in which he was born is either brahmin, rudra kanigaiyar, vellalar or none of these.

The reason presumably lies in the Hindu faith in the ideal laid down in scriptures and the *Gita* (Chap.III) 'to perform action without attachment'. Personality cult was unknown; all credit was dedicated to the God.

\* \* \*

## CAVEAT BIOGRAPHERS:

Some are **truly** blessed with training under many masters and some are **truly** fortunate to claim direct or indirect line of discipleship from Tyagaraja or such other great master. Vivekananda mentions a case (to the contra) :

'...You know the boy who had his head shaven... He calls himself a disciple of Ramakrishna Paramahansa. He had never ever met Shri Ramakrishna in his life and yet a disciple! What impudence ! ' Without an unbroken chain of discipleship — *Guruparampara* — nothing can be done... the power that is transmitted from the guru to the disciple, and from him to his disciples, and so on... '

\* \* \*

## TRUE ART:

'What is the final call of true art ?  
Not to the work which expresses it  
but to the spirit which inspires it  
the divine source of which it reminds us.'

— Paul Brunton.

Time is fleeting, memory is short. The creative genius of today may not be there tomorrow. Posterity needs to be told that 'Such a genius had lived and lived so'. These books are titled 'Garlands' not only because these are garlands of biographies but because '*Maala*' or 'Garland' brings about auspiciousness, prosperity and splendour:

*"Naam athava Sobham athava Lakshmim Latiti Maala."*

\* \* \*

## ASTRONOMICAL PROJECTIONS:

'Venkatamakhin has said that his Melakarta Scheme is mainly to indicate possibilities... He never thought that all could be handled as ragas. An intellectual scale need not necessarily conform to aesthetic standards. Music in India was evolved independently of such schemes.

There are books giving the arohana and the avarohana of thousands of ragas. With five notes, 34776 ragas and with more notes 126936 (ghost) ragas are feasible. All mere speculation. No aesthetic feasibility. '

— Prof. R. Srinivasan.

\* \* \*

## THE TIMELESS AND THE INTERLUDE:

'Indian music has no absolute pitch. For each occasion of singing, a drone furnishes a frame, a sustained tonal centre. The tonic heard continuously before, throughout and after the conclusion of the singing expresses the TIMELESS, the eternal background of things. The singing itself is an INTERLUDE. '

— Krishna Chaitanya.

\* \* \*





the respective rulers and signifies what a nation with a spiritual and cultural base could confer even on a fallen ruler! That was the inherent resilient strength of Bharat !

\* \* \*

### SUBTLE DISTINCTION:

' Today we teach only songs;  
we do not teach music.'

— Nedunuri Krishnamurti on 18 12 1991.

' Music is an art.  
It is not to be taught as a craft.'

— Prof. V.V. Sadagopan

In this context, the name '**Carnatic Music Training Centre**' in lieu of 'Carnatic Music College', Madras seems inappropriate. The College had an impressionable past but has unfortunately been downgraded in 1990 into a vocational training centre. It was established in August 1949 with Central and State Government funds. Prof. P. Sambamurty was placed in charge of the Advisory Committee to start the College at Rahmed Bagh, Santhome. Subsequently it was shifted to Bridge House, Adyar. Sangita Kalanidhi Musiri Subramania Ayyar was the distinguished first Principal. The institution was shifted to Brodi Castle (now called Thendral). The strength reached eight hundred soon. Sandhyavandanam Srinivasa Rao, Sangita Kalanidhi T.N. Krishnan and Dr. Bhanumati Ramakrishna were successive Principals. Dr. Shanmughasundaram is its present Principal. The downgrading of the institution is not in the best interests of the Art and the students. Government of Tamil Nadu may reconsider.

\* \* \*

### NIGHTINGALE:

The work '*Sooktimala*' gives an interesting epigram :

" To Nightingale :

What are the characteristics of the nightingale which are nursed by crows and which have black feathers (with defects). But for the presence of its melodious voice, it will be disdained as inferior even to the crow."

Is it a piece of '*Nindastuti* (simulated criticism) ?

\* \* \*

### SOURCES ;

True to the Rig Vedic hymn, '*Ah ne badraha kruthavo yanthu vishwathaha*' (Let noble thoughts come to us from every side), great composers have drawn inspiration from diverse, noble sources.

## DEATH IS BLIND:

The cruelty of Death's vagaries robs the solace of man breathing his last in congenial environment amidst his kith and kin when it overtakes him in strange places like:

G.N. Balasubramaniam	at Trivandrum
Tiger Varadachariar	at Trivandrum
Veena Balachander	at Bhilai.
John Higgins	(in an accident).
Maharajapuram V. Santhanam	(in a tragic road accident).

\* \* \*

## IMPROVISATION - GENESIS & CULMINATION OF EMOTIONS:

' An unthinking compliance with convention is what Indian music has no place for. Nor is it satisfied with minimal thought, minor shuffling of emphasis in set musical arrangements. Here the arrangement is the arrangement of silence, or rather an arrangement of emotion - bhava. After the musician has collected his thoughts, he picks up a raga...Now he must explore the emotion he has chosen, its nuances, making the notes of the raga an instrument of drama as it were...The music assumes an improvisatory character from here on. He now proceeds to a delectation of pure experience, not emotion any longer but its distillation into an abstract purity; the genesis as well as culmination of all emotion. '

— Gopal Sharman

\* \* \*

## NOISE - DISTURBING NOISE:

Unsolicited noise from the neighbour's television or radio or loud talks or a blaring loudspeaker maddens, damages the psychological and physical health of many people. Noisy light music with its imposing array of players and blaring instruments tend to upset many. Thumping percussionists spoil the melodic, soothing effect of a concert. In such cases, it is only the source or origin that needs to be controlled as no amount of effort at the receiving end could contain the disturbance and bestow satisfactory benefits

' Human response to sound is more logarithmic than linear; to halve the loudness of sound a person hears, the energy of the generated noise must be reduced by a factor of 10. This is made doubly difficult because only a fraction of the operational power of noise source is converted into sound — and reducing something that is already small is a problem. '

— Frank Fahy, University of Southampton in '*New Scientist*'.

\* \* \*

## ART : MAN : NATION:

"Only out of a beautiful heart or mind can a work of true beauty be produced."

A country without culture, without music, painting, poetry, drama and literature is a country without a soul.

Art may be the mere embellishment of a drab human existence ; or it may become a veritable approach to divine existence."

— Paul Brunton

" The Indian Tradition is probably the only living tradition that worships Sound and Music - *Sabda and Nadha* - and the personification of this *Sabda Brahman*. *Nadha Upasana* is the Indian God of Dance, namely Siva-Nataraja. "

— Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, President of India

' Tyagaraja's songs refer to every aspect of the art, musical concepts, practice of music and music as a **yoga** and a **siddhi**, as a path and a realisation. '

' Without poetry, music, dance and drama, there is no zest in living. Without this zest, life is a drab. If I had my way, I would make dance, music and drama compulsory subjects. '

— Dr. K.M. Munshi (1947)

' The compositions of Muthuswamy Dikshitar are mostly in the majestic tempo bringing out the essence of the ragas. Why ? Basically his expertise in veena ought to have exercised its profound influence. Secondly, he should have been won over by the serene environment and atmosphere and by the *sanctity* that prevailed and enveloped the very large Tiruvannamalai temple of Tyagarajaswami and Kamalalayam, the vast tank adjacent to it. He should have visited the temple many times a day for worship and meditation and frequented the tank for his ablutions, etc. Considerable part of his time ought to have been spent in the temple with its vast prakaras (15 acres; 23316 sq. ft.) and the tank with its vast expanse of water (18 acres, 22367 sq.ft.). Fifteen decades back, these should have been the abodes of *santi* and *vicranti*. One has to spend a day there at least now to assimilate this point. It will aid in bringing down blood pressure too. Erudite scholarship, scholarly father and brothers at his religious bent of mind and total surrender to bhakti could find, in the environment of the temple and the tank, no better tempo than the *tsouka kala*. This became his way of life aided and confirmed by his pedestrian travels trekking through the tracts. '

— M. T. V.

\* \* \*

## WHY MELODY?

As Carnatic music was taken as a primary aid for devotion (*Nadopasana*)

Melody and not Harmony could liaise with and lead to the Ultimate.

\* \* \*

## ENDEAVOUR & REALISATION:

‘ Indian Art is not concerned with the conscious striving after Beauty as a thing worthy to be sought after for its own sake; its main endeavour is always directed towards the realisation of an area reaching through the limits to the Infinite. ’

— E.B. Havell.

\* \* \*

## SOUND & COLOUR IN MUSIC:

‘ Can one imagine anything in the art which would surpass the visible rendering of sound, which would enable the eyes to partake of all the pleasures which music gives to the ears ? ’

— Prof. Louis Bertrand Castel (c. 1720)

\* \* \*

## DEFINITE & INDEFINITE:

‘ Music is the most abstract of all arts.... the feeling distilled in sound assumes a time-form which is definite, but a meaning which is undefinable and yet which grips our mind with a sense of absolute truth. ’

— Rabhindranath Tagore.

\* \* \*

## THE PARADOX:

- i. None of the arts was born from their grammar. Grammar came along after Art was born and had developed to high levels of skill and awareness. We are fortunate that no one concocts a grammar and then gets an art to conform to it. Once grammar is born, corroborated and practised, it becomes a reality far greater than the art which it is the grammar of. The grammar becomes the preservative in which the art lives. Every generation gets an opportunity to re-fertilise the grammar.

— Raghava R. Menon

- ii. Nobel Prize Winner Dr. S. Chandrasekhar is puzzled by the dichotomy:

‘ It is often the case that the most important discovery of a scientist is his first; and in contrast, the deepest creation of an artiste is actually often his last. ’

— ‘*Truth & Beauty*’

Note: This offers true scope for research.

\* \* \*

## THE VITAL DIFFERENCE:

Comparisons are iniquitous but they indicate relative values and standards. Here is a **story** recounted by B.C.Deva:

Swami Haridas, the greatest singer of his time, was a recluse and hermit indifferent to laurels. Emperor Akbar longed to hear him but the Swami, like Tyagaraja, was out of bounds to the writ and pressures of sovereign powers. Finally Tansen suggested a ruse. Akbar went with Tansen as his tambura-bearer and listened with rapt wonder to the heavenly music of Haridas. Akbar enquired of Tansen ,

‘ How is that with all your greatness, your music is so poor compared to the Swamiji’s ? ’

The polite answer of Tansen was:

‘ What else can it be ? For I sing to the Emperor of this land, but he sings to the Emperor of the Creation ! ’

The naked truth and the audacity of the reply are matched only by poet Kambar’s reply to the Chola king:

‘ You may be respected within the frontiers of thy kingdom;  
but the poet is respected wherever he goes. ’

\* \* \*

## CLASSICALITY:

" It means the primacy of raga bhava.... unfolding of the raga swaroopa... Hitting the ball out of the ground may be the acme of skill in cricket but in tennis the ball must land within the court every time. If one innovates in tennis by hitting the ball out of the ground, it ceases to be tennis.’ (P.K. Doraiswami). None can excel this succinct statement.

Even so, classical Carnatic music has its well-spelt-out theory, known traditions and conventions, like the British Parliamentary System, which together lay the royal road (rajamarga) to classicism.

\* \* \*

## DIVINE INSTRUMENT:

‘ When through music, the world comes into my vision,  
I see Him; I know Him.’

‘ I have sung many songs for Thee Oh ! Lord  
but ask for no return. ’

‘ Thou hast sung many songs for me  
Thou can’t not help but remember. ’

— Rabhindranath Tagore ( 1861 – 1941)

\* \* \*

## THEORY NO SUBSTITUTE FOR KNOWLEDGE:

A jackass with strong musical intents one night sauntered into a cucumber field and enjoyed himself to his heart's content together with a jackal...making a fine though rather ill-timed dinner. He decided to make a song of it and asked the jackal what raga he would like.

'Is it necessary ? Couldn't you do without it ? (disguising his alarm).  
People with coughs don't steal and as for your voice...'

The jackass took the reply to be highly uncomplimentary and got off promptly to theorise:

'Listen, there are seven swaras, three scales, twenty-two srutis...knowing all these, I can sing melodiously.'

'Very well, have it your way. I am at the gate keeping an eye open for the farmer and his son.'

Our musician was too slow to take the Jackal's hint and started. The farmer rushed in and expressed his somewhat unkind appreciation with a stick.

— Story from '*Panchatantra*' cited by Gopal Sharman.

\* \* \*

## RAGA SUGGESTS AND HINTS:

Abhinava Gupta, who wrote a commentary on Anandavardhana's '*Dhwani*' theory stated that in all art forms, suggestion is more powerful than statement. It is of particular relevance to raga alapana as raga only suggests and hints at various emotions.

— Lalita Ramakrishna in '*Raga & Rasa*' in *Shanmukha* 10/90

\* \* \*

## SOLITARY PRAYER:

'If I go to Heaven, which I very much doubt, I shall ask of God one favour. And that is to send Shakespeare down to earth and make him sit for Madras University Examination in Shakespeare just for the fun of seeing him fail.'

— Malcolm Muggeridge.

A certain tribute to the standards that prevailed then. Likewise, if Venkatamakhin or Subbarama Dikshitar had been asked to sit for a paper on 'lakshanas' (theory) at the Music Academy in the second quarter of this century, the fun of seeing them fail would positively have been provided !

## RUMOUR OF DEATH:

• A hoax was played on very respectable musicians like Semmangudi Srinivasa Ayyar and Musiri Subramania Ayyar that Papanasam Sivan was dead - *Vide 'A Garland'* page 497. (Telephone aids such subterfuges as seen from oft-recurring hoax-threats to flights which are religiously and enthusiastically publicised too inducing mischief-mongers with a fifteen paise postcard or a rupee coin to make a phone call to enjoy such jokes.) Here is a beautiful epigram of Ben Johnson (penned prior to Alexander Graham Bell, Thomas Watson, etc. perfected the telephone):

### Ben Johnson to King James:

' Upon the happy false rumour of his death on March 20, 1607:

" That we thy loss might know;  
And thou our love,  
Great Heaven did well  
To give ill fame free wing ! "

Rajah Bhartruhari did it to highlight human frailties and distortions. Like King James, Papanasam Sivan lived long, blessed by the hoax since the soft, great vaggeyakara could die only when the Celestial call was due.

\* \* \*

## JOHNSONIAN ERROR :

' Music is the only sensual pleasure without vice. '

' Thy body is all vice ; thy mind all virtue. '

— Samuel Johnson.

*Vide 'Boom, Booze, Doom'* at page 444 of *A Garland*. Magnificent lives with phenomenal fame, popularity and prospects invited doom on themselves. Could the body act independent of the mind? Vice or virtue, does it not originate in the mind? If the mind is the principal player, does not the body play only a supportive role as voice support or second fiddle or percussive support? Johnson seems to err.

\* \* \*

## VIOLIN :

' The violin was the passport, purse and the path to the summit of society. '

— Yehudi Menuhin.

Menuhin was referring to the past. In the world of Carnatic music, veena had occupied a similar place.

\* \* \*

## SHAW ON TEACHER :

‘ He who can, does.  
He who cannot, teaches.’

— George Bernard Shaw.

\* \* \*

## SALVAGE ALL COMPOSITIONS :

Semmangudi Srinivasa Ayyar suggested in 1938 in *Ananda Vikatan* imposing a ban on repeating any kirtan for at least five years to salvage ignored, neglected, forgotten compositions of merit.

— Vatsala Bhaskaran in *Shanmukha* 4/90

Fifty-four long years have passed. The suggestion of the maestro has gone the way of the sermons of Presidents and Prime Ministers made daily. Cannot the Federation of Sabhas make a trial for a season or a year before the suggestion celebrates its Sashtiapthapoorti !

\* \* \*

## KIRTAN AND KRITI :

Tyagaraja has himself demonstrated the subtle difference between kriti and kirtan in two songs with identical pallavi - *Koluvaiyunnade (Bhairavi)* and *Koluvaiyunnade (Devagandhari)*. One enables ample scope for vowel extension to bring in sangatis which provide for creativity and ornamentation and focus on the soul of Carnatic music. Tyagaraja was not only a brilliant vaggeyakara but a lakshanakara of immense merit who illustrated the hard facts of theory through his delectable songs providing examples. He claims the privilege of Sangita Sastra Gnani in the song ‘*Sangita Sastra Gnanamu*’ (*Salagabhairavi*). Music impregnated with a good text like the Ramayana full of rasas confers *Sarupya*, affection, devotion, good attachments, Lord’s grace, glory and wealth!

— Dr. S.A.K. Durga (June 28, 1992)

\* \* \*

## INSPIRED SONGS :

Celestial music inspires and there is identity of interest among great masters in bringing to focus noble concepts and thoughts . T.S. Parthasarathy gives some specimen songs of Tyagaraja :

Nada tanum	(Chittaranjani)	Sangita Ratnakara, etc.
Nadopasana	(Begada)	
Sobhillu	(Jaganmohini)	
Telisi Rama	(Purnachandrika)	
Nadachi Nadachi	(Kharaharapriya)	Upeya Nama Viveka of Upanishad Brahman Yogi
		Khelati Mama Hridaye of Sadasiva Brahmendral.

Fundamental truths are eternal.



# D

## INCIDENTS, INTERESTING NOTES

### THE SCHOLARLY REASONS:

The great Mangudi musician of yester decades was an eminent scholar in sanskrit lore. Past his prime, he gave a concert obliging the large number of his sincere admirers. It was a sad, harrowing experience and a dismal disappointment to all of them. But the aged vidwan did not take it to heart.

Admirer S: Sir, how is it that you have lost track of even the sahitya ?

Vidwan : ' Runānu bhanda rupēna  
Pasu patni Sudhālaya I  
Runa Kshayē Kshayam yānti  
Ka tatra parivēdanah ' II

(Family members and assets gather together at different times as a result of the karma of previous births. When the debt is discharged, each individual departs. This is our Sastra. I learnt sahitya and it was with me. The time has come for it to go. It has left. Neither sahitya nor I am responsible !)

Admirer R : Vidwanji, let it be so. How you could lose the beauty of your raga rendition too ?

Vidwan : ' Idham kāshtam idham kāshtam  
Nadhi theerē samāgamah I  
Samyōgancha viyōgancha  
Ka tatra parivēdhanah ' II

(On either side of the river, there was a log. Let them represent the sahitya and the raga. When the river flowed to its brim, both joined the stream and sailed along enjoying each other's company. The river branched off into two after some distance. Each log entered one of the branches as if bidding good bye to each other. How can we cry over it ?

Admirer T: Sorry to mention, Sir, that sahitya and raga might have deserted you because of age. But the talas are elementary. Even that was faulty today?

Vidwan : ' Eka Vrukshē Samarootah  
Nānā pakshi Samāgamah I  
Dhoora Dhoorēshu Deseshu  
Ka tatra parivēdhanah II

(That is understandable, friend. The tree in the forest is full of fruits. Birds from diverse places frequent it. Hunger satisfied, they fly back to their respective homes. They were together and enjoyed company and food for a brief while, you see. Sahitya left like the bereavement of a family member. Raga left next like the log in the river without much ado. Why tala should remain alone ? Like the bird it too deserted the tree and the forest ! I am the tree, lone and alone. No need to worry. )

His spiritual erstwhile *nadopasana* stood him emotionally in good stead. Admirers were soaked in tears and 'shed some pious drops'.

\* \* \*

## ASTROLOGICAL INTERPRETATION

I got the horoscope of a top-level artiste and gave it to the Astrological Bureau as the horoscope of 'Mr. X' for processing. The report given by the Centre is given below:

" Born in Rishabha lagnam. Birth No. is 9. Fate No. is 2. Lagnadhipan Sukran, who is also kala-karakan, is in Baghyasthana. Chandran is in Katakam having the sapthama aspects of Sukran and Suryan.. Rahu is in Vagsthana, receiving the sapthama aspects of Budha and Kethu, and also getting the special aspect of Kumbha Guru.

An artist by birth, with full of shiva-shakthi kripa. He is a pundit with natural inclination to do research and discover unknown mystical connections present in cosmic structure; capable of reaching unreachable depths and experiencing *Atmananda*.

Sukra getting the aspect of Sani also. This should have made him at once a disciplinarian and adventurer. Intellectual impatience, bordering sometimes on arrogance, should have made him not-a-very-sought-after person in his earlier part of life. Only those, who can conquer their own initial inhibitions, would have been able to get the immense benefits of his association.

From the point of view of others, he should have suffered a lot in the first three decades of his life. Totally and recklessly brushing aside the importance of the things mundane, he would have lived in his own world of creation. When others could not understand or appreciate this attitude and found it difficult to get along with him, they would have tasted his impatience and sometimes even anger. As life moved on, the same persons would have become very intimate towards him.

This individual's success story commences with the beginning of Sukra Dasa on 26-7-1961. Thereafter, he would never have looked back. The ascending trend would have also made him more and more likeable. The nicety, polish and gloss would have enriched not only his external behaviour but also the deeper recesses of his mind.

When his inner experiences of the ineffable divine bliss emerged as artistic outpourings, the rasikas would have become mental slaves and addicts. Vrischika

The Lord of his Birth No. and also Lagnam, Angaraka happens to be in Vrayasthana in his horoscope, without any subha drishti. The colourful fireworks of this artist is quite likely to come to a sudden end. "

15-09-92.

Kudanthai Sa. Venkataraman  
Chengacherial Astrological Centre,  
MADRAS-92.

**Confidential Note:** As mentioned earlier, the name of the artiste was withheld from the Astrological Centre. Now it is shared with the artiste's admirers. The horoscope is that of Veena Dr. S. Balachander whose life finds place in Part II. Admirers may assess the significance of the predictions.

\* \* \*

### MUDRA (Signature):

This is not the monopoly of musical composers alone. Hoysala sculpture has the unique feature of individual sculptural works bearing the signatures of individual creators! In Somnathpur seven signatures are stated to have been found around the walls from the basement. Mudras are classified under :

Kshetra (shrine)  
Bhakti (Devotion)  
Raja (Pallavi Gopalayyar's  
Todi-Kanakangi)

Linga (Deity - Pancha Linga, etc.)  
Vamsa and Rasa.  
Acharya (Paidala Gurumurti Sastri  
on his guru)

\* \* \*

### IGNORANCE IS BLISS:

" Where ignorance is bliss,  
'Tis folly to be wise. " — Grey.

The rendition is very pleasing. Mix-up of shades of other ragas does not involve the lay lover of melody *sans* science. Critic Subbudu once wrote:

' *Pushpalathika* is an enchanting and haunting raga... has many next-of-kin hovering around it. It has a chameleon-like character, now sounding like *Sreeragam*, now *Madhyamavati* and now *Manirangu*... I am not ashamed to admit that I mistook the alapana at the initial stages for *Manirangu* and only later I could identify it as *Pushpalathika*. '

Whether this is a veiled attack or an innocent statement is not known. Whether the rendition is in *Darbar* or *Nayaki*, *Bhairavi* or *Manji*, *Kedaragaula* or *Narayanagaula*, *Bilahari* or *Desakshi*, *Varali* or *Vijayasri*, *Ahiri* or *Vakulabharana* does not matter to the lay so long as it pleases the ears. As Tanjore T.R. Kalyanasundaram says, ' the grace of a raga is not lost if owing to mistaken interpretation of the listener, it is construed as *Pratapa Varali* and not *Nata Narayani*'. Someone however whispers that while rose is no less fragrant if called by some other name. it would not then cost that much ! That, of course, is true.

Ignorance is Bliss; all glory to it. Knowledge kills that easily available Bliss. It makes mountain of a molehill. *Sans* knowledge, the ear, tongue and nose hold undisputed sway. For instance, at Tonga there was a royal feast. The gracious queen was helping herself to chunks of a particular dish — a special delicacy. P.C. Alexander, Secretary to the Guest of Honour Indira Gandhi, records:

'When she said that it was octopus, my appetite disappeared totally on *knowing* it. I could not bring myself to eat any fish or meat at that feast after that !'

The erstwhile castle of satisfaction built on the base of his ignorance was smashed to pieces by that ray of knowledge!! Even so, the connoisseur looks to unpolluted classical stuff making it more and more difficult to the uninitiated. The gulf widens! Scientific music is for a restricted oligarchy, the *cognoscenti*.

How knowledge changed the attitude of the good, pious ruler of the Palghat is relevant and interesting. He fell in love with a huntress. His wise minister got him confess the cause of his forlorn condition. He assured the ruler of satisfaction subject to his not talking to the huntress and not seeking a light at the meet ! The ruler met her at a chosen mandap that night and had satisfaction. Alas, the ruler realised suddenly that he had sinned and refused to perform his regal duty. Only when the minister revealed that the lady of the mandap was none but his own queen, he felt relieved. He resumed his duties but only after doing penance for having entertained sinful thoughts — *Palghat Purana*.

\* \* \*

## DISCARDS TRIUMPHED:

- i. Koneri Vaidyanatha Ayyar was vocal support to Harikatha maestro Tirupazhanam Panchapakesa Sastri. His voice was then gruff, lacked pliability and could not translate his rich mental formulations. With cutting sarcasm, Sastri told him that his (Ayyar's) voice was too good for musical discourse and that he could seek his fortunes as a vocalist. Konerirajapuram has a beautiful Nataraja icon. Even as the Lord danced to win, Vaidyanatha vowed that either he became a matchless vocalist or his arteries would burst in his efforts to tame the intractable voice. And with tenacious will-power he tamed and seasoned his turbulent voice. He dwarfed stalwarts and shot to the top **as a vocalist**.
- ii. When Mysore Vasudevacharya was ridiculed, he resolved to attain proficiency and secure recognition from Vina Seshanna himself. He requested him to accept him as a disciple.

'You and music are poles apart. Why should you bother about music ?  
Eat nicely and feel contented.'

' You will not be able to learn music. '

' If I do ? '

' If you do not ? '

' I shall discard my sacred thread. '

They were travelling by a train in second and third classes respectively. The test was that Seshanna would teach Ata tala varna in *Sankarabharanam* '*Chalamelara*' whenever the train stopped between Coimbatore and Bangalore, that he would not repeat the varna and at Bangalore Vasudeva should render it fully! At each stop, Vasudeva would go, hear, come back and memorise when the train was on the move. Bangalore Cantonment saw the guru shedding tears of joy and hug his disciple and say:

' Acharya! I committed a great blunder. I apologize to you. Forgive me. When my days are over, my place will surely be yours. '

Seshanna was in ecstasy and young Vasu soon blossomed into a stalwart musician, composer and teacher.

- iii. T.R. Mahalingam could not get training from Flautist Sanjiva Rao. When Mali played , Rao shouted in contempt, ' Is it flute play? ' The Head of the Music College, Chidambaram too denied him a seat. Mali's precocity asserted itself and quite soon he became a legend.
- iv. Pachimirium Adiappaier of ' *Viriboni* ' fame hounded out young Gopala shouting, ' Away with you; not even Lord Venkatesa can blow a whiff of music into you '. Gopala willed to get his master's blessing and toiled hard. Later, one day, he sat at the doorstep of his master's house and sang away all he had. The guru's lady was surprised and told Adiappier on his return. He summoned Gopala and asked him to sing. " Out came *Vanajakshi*, a tana varna in *Kalyani*... came *Kanakangi*, another tana varna in *Todi*. Adiappier was in transports. **He found his equal.** 'Dear Gopal, I called upon Vankateswara when I cold-shouldered you. I see, you have His blessings in abundance. Go to Tirupati, sing His praises and **write your name in letters of gold on the tablet of time.**' "

— R. Rangaramanuja Ayyangar.

That was pallavi Gopala Ayyar ! And he got his doctorate from his eminent guru himself.

## AUDIENCE DISCIPLINE:

- i. Gottuvadyam Sakharama Rao insisted on complete disciplined silence. If anyone dared to speak, he would take his gottuvadyam, walk away and **would not accept his fee...** I cannot think of anyone extracting such iron discipline. He was paid Rs.35 out of which he would give Rs. ten to his brother. There would be no mathematical struggle in his concert. **No mridangam too.** His concert would be reposeful and sweet..

— Dr. Semmangudi Srinivasa Ayyar in '*Kalakshetra*'

- ii. The Madras sabha leaning towards chamber music concerts, 'Nadopasana' distributed a small yellow chit carrying a plea-

' Kindly avoid leaving the hall while the Thani Avarthanam\* is on or while a song is being rendered or during mangalam. '

\* ( Percussion Solo)

The request reflects what everybody entertains sometime or other and looked forward to its strict enforcement except in his individual case perhaps. An interval is desirable but how to marshal back the audience! Closing the gates would convert it into a concentration camp. Of course, the musician too has to cooperate and ought not to drive the listener to jump discipline by escaping through the window regardless of physical injury!

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## MUSICAL FAREWELL:

Nagaswara prodigy T.N. Rajarathinam Pillai died. The cortege covered the distance from Adyar to All India Radio on the Marina. Pillai's recorded music was all got and played all through the route. A rare tribute without a parallel!

\* \* \*

## BATHROOM MUSIC:

National Institute of Community Development, Hyderabad: 1971. The Dean gave a tea to the sixteen participants at his residence. He asked the author (of the *Garland Series*) to sing. The author explained, 'mine is of bathroom variety' and sought to be excused. Promptly the Dean requisitioned a bucket of water, soap, towel, etc., to provide the accoustics!

\* \* \*

## ALL WRONG :

Konerirajapuram Vaidyanatha Ayyar did not belong to Konerirajapuram but to Marathurai.

Papanasam Sivan did not belong to Papanasam but to Polagam.

Karaikudi Veena Brothers did not belong to Karaikudi but to Tirugokarnam.

\* \* \*

## ROYAL PLOY:

Mummadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar, Ruler of Mysore had deep and scholarly interest in epics and discourses. Subramanyachar earned his goodwill with his delectable discourses. One day the discourse in the palace was delayed as the ruler was preoccupied. It was a long wait. 'My father stretched himself on the floor and slipped into deep sleep gently snoring. The ruler got the bundle of books brought by my father removed stealthily and then had him woken up. Without any visible sign of embarrassment, father resumed the discourse with his usual elegance least affected by the disappearance of the books. Royal admiration was total and my father was appointed as Asthana Vidwan.'

— Mysore K. Vasudevacharya in '*Memoirs*'

\* \* \*

## INSULT, INJURY & INDEMNITY :

'Before I attained three years, I lost my father. My mother was in despair. My grandfather took me to the Dewan—Administrator Rangacharlu. He dismissed us both summarily saying that the State had no resources to maintain *beggars!* The second audience resulted only in the Dewan's outburst and my grandfather hitting back that the Dewan's treatment was a poor recompense for all the reverence and regard the Maharajah had to my father. Some time later, Rangacharlu came to our house personally and not only apologised for the rude treatment but granted Rs.four and a half per month for my education as stipend!

— K. Vasudevacharya in '*Memoirs*'.

Dewan Rangacharlu had shown his character and capacity to repair a wrong; better late than never.

\* \* \*

## STREET SINGERS:

- i. The Ruler of Mysore, Krishnaraja Wodeyar was a connoisseur and patron of music and had the galaxy to regale him with the best. One day, the penetrating tune of a beggar woman in the street enthralled him so much that he requested Vasudevacharya to get the notation for it and render it! Poor Vasudevacharya ran round the streets and ultimately located her in the slum near Rani Choultry. He parted with his costly upper cloth, got the song

notated, hurried back and demonstrated the tune. The pleased ruler knowing that he had bartered away his upper cloth for the song presented him with a costly shawl.

— K. Vasudevacharya in 'Memoirs'.

Probably that was Vasudevacharya's maiden attempt at notation and his only indulgence in light music! **There is the further fact that the beggar turned out to be his guru even as tribal Sabari was host to Prince Rama at a lunch !**

- ii. Several beggars do have a captivating voice and enchanting free-lance rendition all unconsciously scattered for a small coin ! ( Would not Wardha Scheme envisaged by Gandhiji and Rajaji spot out native talents in these and shape them up under the scheme TRYSEM ?) Malaikottai Govindaswami Pillai once found exhilarant music in a beggar and appreciated the hidden raga '*Sindhu Bairavi*'. He exchanged satisfaction for rupee one (then) and a silk saree! Was the beggar aware of her potential? Many a flower is born to waste its fragrance! Musical acumen is no warranty or passport to eminence. Dame luck should be there too! How many K.B. Sundarambal(s) waste their talents in streets, bus-stands and trains! S.G. Kittappa is a scarce resource !!

\* \* \*

### SOPHISTICATION NOT ENOUGH:

The apparently more sophisticated western flute is unable to produce the nuances which the bamboo flute effortlessly brings out, says Dr. N. Ramani, the top-ranking flautist.

\* \* \*

### MATANGA'S LOVE OF FOLK MUSIC:

'India has a very rich tradition of folk music. While the elite have always sought to maintain the distinction between the Margi (classical) and the Deshi (folk) music, it is very significant that Matanga of the eighth century called his great work on music –

" *BRIHADDESHI* "

— Krishna Chaitanya.

\* \* \*

### NAGASWARAM: PAST & PRESENT:

'Seven or eight pairs of nagaswara vidwans would play for daily temple processions and during the main gopura-vasal aradhana, all would play



together. At such moments, even atheists would feel overwhelmed by bhakti. *Mallari (Nattai)* and only *ghana ragas (Todi, Sankarabharanam, Kharaharapriya, etc.)*, pallavi and one or two Tiruppugazh would constitute the programme for the whole night. Raga elaboration was the main and no kritis. Kritis were started by Tiruppamburam Brothers, Madurai Ponnusami and Tiruvizhimalalai Brothers.'

— Dr. Semmangudi Srinivasa Ayyar.

Note : The nagaswara artistes cited played the role for nagaswara what Ariyakudi did for concerts.

\* \* \*

### KANJIRA HAD ITS DAY:

Kanjira is a secondary percussion accompaniment only. But in the programmes of 1915, kanjira with Manpoondia Pillai as the artiste had figured below violin and above mridangam!

When teenage Palghat Mani faced for the first time Dakshinamurti Pillai on kanjira being given the pride of place on the concert stage, he revolted and cried that the instrument should decide the place and rank and not the seniority of individual artistes. He won!

Now ghatam has emerged as the popular second-level accompaniment (*upa vadya*) at concerts – probably for want of enough kanjira artistes.

\* \* \*

### GOTTUVADHYAM:

The instrument was called 'Jha Vari' according to '*Kumara Tantra*', says Avudayarkoil Harihara Bhagavatar. His father Sitarama Bhagavatar had accompanied Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar on gottuvadyam and he too had done so. Ravi Kiran calls it Chitra Veena.

\* \* \*

### MRIDANGA VEENAI:

Audanoor P. Haridas, M.A. B.Sc., Dip (Indian Music), a disciple of Mangudi Dorairaja Bhagavatar has developed a mridanga veenai to be operated with bamboo sticks; can be played by both mridangists and violinists.

\* \* \*

### HARMONIUM :

Rabhindranath Tagore, Jawaharlal Nehru, Mahakavi Subramania Bharati and

many Carnatic musicians hated, as the soul of Indian music with its gamakas, glides and continuity could not be reproduced on it. It was hounded out of the All India Radio also in 1939 but was allowed to return in 1971 – after thirty-two years of exile. Brother of C.V. Raman, C.S. Ayyar described singing with harmonium as 'being married to a woman afflicted to tuberculosis'. Strangely Hemambikadas Perur Subramania Dikshitar was *non pareil* in playing on harmonium. K.S. Devudu Ayyar, S.G. Kasi Ayyar, A. Arunachalappa, Urayur Khader Batcha and K.T. Nataraja Pillai were masters on harmonium providing exquisite voice and instrumental support on the dramatic stage with classical songs. Malaikottai Govindaswami Pillai, Jalatarangam Ramaniah, actress P.S. Ratna Bai and T.A. Sambamurti Asariar were harmonists too.

\* \* \*

## MRIDANGAM:

Swati went to a lake to fetch water. There was a sudden downpour and rain drops spluttered on lotus leaves which presented a green carpet on the lake. Rain drops trickling on the leaves produced a pleasing rhythm with an ebb and flow of the pitch to the sensitive ears of Swati (which cannot be appreciated by most now suffering noise-pollution). Inspired by it, with his creative instinct and with the help of Vishwakarma, he fashioned the mridangam with a body of 'mrith' (clay). The mridangam thus made its appearance. Bharata traced his knowledge of percussive instruments to Swati and Narada.

Till the turn of the century mridangam was much smaller with larger drum heads. The change is attributed to the Pudukottai maestro, Dakshinamurti Pillai by T.V. Gopalakrishnan.

'Tanjore bani (style) laid stress on sahitya (text of song) and Pudukottai on solkattus.' B.M. Sundaram mentions that mridangam and maddalam are different and that mridangam, though older, came into music concerts only when public recitals came into vogue.

\* \* \*

## TYAGARAJA CHARGE-SHEETED!

'The song in raga *Sarasangi* "*Menu Juchi Mosa*" is cast in a language totally unworthy of a composer of avowed saintliness. There are at least a dozen of his compositions which are in similar worldly language.'

The controversy was carried on in '*Sruti*'. The cited song is to the following effect:

'Oh mind! Do not get deluded by the illusory personal appearance of women. If you

pierce with their breasts which like mounds provide the resting place for heads. '

An issue for deep consideration! Saints and poets refer in such contexts to the enticing, voluptuous breed and not to the entire fair sex as such. Tyagaraja has only clarified what the Lord has said:

' The turbulent senses, O Son of Kunti, do violently carry away  
the mind of a wise-man, though he be striving (to control them). '

— *Bhagawad Gita* – II-60.

\* \* \*

## HIS LIMITATIONS:

" What Oscar Wilde said of Swinburn could well apply to Veena Balachander – 'He has his limitations, the chief of which, curiously enough, (is) the lack of any sense of limit.' "

— S. Krishnan.

\* \* \*

## SANGITA SIROMANI :

(1529 A.D.)

Sultan of Kara (about sixty kilometers from Allahabad), a vassal of the Sultan of Janupur garnered a large number of books, started a library on music and convened a conference of the best scholars. Entrusted with the task of preparing a work on music, the scholars brought out the work '*Sangita Siromani*' to which the Sultan is stated to have added his views.

— R. Rangaramanuja Ayyangar.

Note: This happened just three years after the first Battle of Panipat. It is seen that cultural activity had been carried on notwithstanding the historic political upheaval which is a tribute to the Spirit of Bharath!

\* \* \*

## ALL ABOUT BETALS:

- i. Chewing betels with arecanut and chunnam has been a favourite pastime of the rich and the poor in India. The trio constitute the symbol of auspiciousness and is vital at functions. It clears the throat; and so, is a favourite with musicians. Handling this trinity is a seductive art specialised in by professionals. They would seem to represent bhava, raga and tala (rhythm). When tobacco enters, it is like the miscellany (tukkada) which gives the kick !
- ii. Syama Sastri of the Carnatic Trinity was fond of chewing. Once the mouthful paste spilt on his preceptor Adippiah. When Sastri felt shaken, Adippiah set him at rest saying that he took it as a benediction of Goddess Kamakshi, at

whose temple Sastri was a priest.

- iii. Mysore Vasudevacharya was undergoing training under Patnam Subramania Ayyar at Tiruvaiyaru. Violin maestro Tirukodikaval Krishna Ayyar visited Tiruvaiyaru and was doing his customary practice in the pre-dawn hours. Vasudeva sat under the window outside the house and was enjoying the masterly *Kambhoji* ragalapana and pallavi. He was drinking deep the joyous stream of sweet melody emanating from inside. When at last Krishna Ayyar was seen coming towards the window, young Vasu was afraid to stir out fearing detection.

"Ayyar spat out the pan he had been chewing all along right on my head. Ayyar saw me only after the mischief had been done. (Who would have imagined that Vasu was hiding under the outer window in his anxiety to hear music at such an early hour!) He came out profusely apologizing,

'Oh, What a sin have I committed. You must kindly forgive me.'

'Far from it, Sir. I take it as the very blessing of Sarada Devi (Goddess of Learning). This is indeed the reward of my good deeds in earlier births!'

The highly embarrassed maestro took Vasu inside and after a wash drenched him with exquisite pallavi all over again – a gala special for him!

— (Vasudevacharya).

- iv. Veena Dhanammal while rendering a sanskrit sloka took a mouthful of betels. The patriot-parliamentarian-connoisseur of music, S. Satyamurti felt concerned about the consequential rendition. To his amazement, there flowed chaste, clear verse '*Agrekruthva*' from the betel-stoked mouth of Dhanammal. Satyamurti then conceded that it was but proper for her to stuff her mouth with betels!

— Source: T. Sankaran.

\* \* \*

## HABITS CHANGE:

Actors and musicians rarely touched a drink while on the stage; and the mike had not made its advent then. Then pepper and sugarcandy were favoured by vocalists. Now the flask of coffee is part of the scanty equipment of even the juniormost vocalist aided with the mike. Accompanists to the right, left and back and the audience in front enjoy the rhythmical intake of coffee for the health of the concert.

This brings to mind an incident reported in '*A Garland*':

"Semmangudi Dr. Srinivasa Ayyar asked his long-time friend and admirer, Sri Udayar,

'You have been listening to my concerts for decades. **What have you done for me ?** '

'I have been listening to your music for decades. **What have you done to me ?** '

So saying, Udayar snatched away Ayyar's angavastram (upper cloth) and walked away ! "

Assuming that Ayyar is a thirty-year old musician now, the angavastram would not be there but only the flask! What will be Udayar's reaction ?

\* \* \*

## AESTHETICISM, CONNOISSEURSHIP OR PAROCHIALISM ?

Love of the Cauvery and Tiruvaiyaru was only second to love of his *Ishta Devata*, Sri Rama. Tyagaraja's *Sari Vedalina (Asaveri)* is a portrayal of the then majestic river in its full flow. *Muripemu Galige Gade (Mukhari)* is a challenge to the Prince of Ayodhya whether He could ever think of saying 'no' to the query –

'Oh Rama! Are you not happy that you have secured a charming and beautiful place known as the Panchanada Kshetra beautiful in all this world on the bank of the Cauvery over which blows the incomparable zephyr... palatial and beautiful buildings... divine trees with sweet-smelling flowers... melody of cuckoos...'

The Saint feels pleased that his Rama is well accommodated on the bank of the river which he loves and at the place blessed by Nature bountifully. How serene and heavenly Tiruvaiyaru should have been fifteen decades back!

\* \* \*

## BLESSINGS OF HEREDITY

None teaches a fisher-boy to swim. Even so, heredity places the progeny in the path, tradition, virtue and genius of the family and the birth of a prodigy is not a freak occurrence but almost the rule.

- a. The Sembanarkoil nagaswara family: Pallavi Vaidyanathan (c. 1895) left behind the renowned Ramasamy, who left a crop of four (SRG,SRD,SRV and SRK) each of whom left off-shoots in SRGR, SRGS, SRDM, SRDV, SRVD and SRKK. And the focus goes on enlarging.

- b. The family of the Tanjore Quartette: Starting from Gangaimuthu Nattuvanar (17th Cent.), the family has presented successive waves of highly competent composers, musicians, dancers, etc. K.P. Sivanandam and K.P. Kittappa represent the family now.
- c. Lalgudi, Maharajapuram, Karaikudi, Rudrapatnam, Dwaram, Dhanammal and many other families are eloquent examples of how heredity creates and sustains the finest dynasties of artistes. Mauryas, Guptas, Cholas and the Mughals on the political side and eminent sculptors, etc. present finest reasons to support the case for sustaining Art in artistes' families.

Note: It is however strange but true that stalwarts like Tyagaraja, Muthuswami Dikshitar, Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar, Ariyakudi, Chembai, Musiri or Semmangudi have not left any of their progeny in the musical field. Of course, the basic causes differ. Worth a research.

\* \* \*

## LEGENDARY GREAT

The Acharya advises the low-born to move out of his way. The latter enquires to which side he should move since he finds God on all sides. The Acharya realises the fundamental truth in his averment and respects him. Kanakadasa's life (*Vide 'A Garland' page 104*) carries a like incident.

Guru Vyasa gave bananas to each of his disciples to be taken unobserved. All but one returned relishing the taste of the ripe pulpy fruits. Kanakadasa, the 'excepted, returned with the banana in hand saying –

'Wherever I went, I found God's eyes on me;  
I could not take the banana, Guruji.'

One of the great Dasas, his songs deal with morality, truth, non-casteism and dharma.

\* \* \*

## THE DISTINCTION:

'Be careful. the city abounds with bad girls who will lure you with sweet words, songs and dances.'

'I shall be very careful, Father. Don't worry.'

The train from the far South started moving. The young prodigy's fertile mind stirred up by the tempo of the train gathering speed presented a doubt. He shouted to his father:

' Father, If any girl promises she would not touch my purse and solicits...'

The loving father, full of solicitude, shouted back:

' Wire to me. I too will come. '

The first advice denotes *Sampradaya* (traditional) and the second *avant garde*!

\* \* \*

## HANDEL:

(1685–1759)

- i. The birth place of Saint-composer Jayadeva is in dispute - claimed by two different places. Sadasiva Brahmendral is reputed to have had his immortality at different places of Bharath. Here is a case from the West laying anxious claim to a connection which was not there.

A tablet in Whitchurch Parish Church declares that Handel was organist having composed the oratorio of 'Esther' on its organ. Handel was never organist there and never composed oratorios on organ. (Pelican - Lives of Great Composers.)

- ii. Handel, then a physical, mental and financial wreck, in his characteristic way of acting during periods of misfortune promoted a 'Society for the Support of Decayed Musicians', which flowered into the Royal Society of Musicians. (It is suffering that reveals the ingenuous flame in man and provides the hidden genius with opportunities to sparkle.)

\* \* \*

## STRATEGEM ?

'There is an amusing or rather a disconcerting account of the way in which local pandits disputed the value and authenticity of "*Nowka Charitram*" of Tyagaraja and argued that the story had no basis in puranic lore. It is said that Venkataramana Bhagavatar, the prime disciple of Tyagaraja, produced a palm-leaf manuscript in sanskrit which satisfied the pandits! It was learnt only later that actually the palm leaf manuscript was the creation of Bhagavatar himself who composed verses and resorted to the strategem to enhance the reputation of his master ! '

– C.P. Ramaswami Ayyar.

Note: The birth-date of Tyagaraja is settled only on the basis of a cadjan-leaf left by Venkata Suri. He might not have had any such need to concoct one!

\* \* \*

## ODD or CRUDE:

- i. It was night. Muthiah Bhagavatar arrived and Oorkadu Zamindar received

him. Suddenly **the artiste fell at the feet of the Zamindar**. Struck by the strange conduct, the Zamindar checked up and found his cartman donning Bhagavatar's clothes and Bhagavatar the cartman's! Bhagavatar explained that it was just a successful masquerade! (Presumably this should have been enacted when he was young)

— Source: 'Yengay, Anna Yengay'.

- ii. Flute Mali was engaged by Tambaram Sangita Sabha in 1957 with M.S.Gopalakrishnan, violinist and Ramnad Eswaran, mridangist as accompanists. At the eleventh hour Mali came to the mike and announced that he would not play as he was not in a mood to do so and that his disciple Kesi would give the concert.

— Source: N. Kesi.

- iii. Veena Seshanna's four-hour concert at Coimbatore was a delight and he was honoured with double the promised fee. Seshanna introduced Vasudevachar saying, 'He is a great vocal musician. He sings admirably'. The great vidwan's introduction led to pressing requests to sing. Failing to catch up the joke behind Seshanna's encomium, Vasudeva started singing in his own then crude style *Okamata Okabanamu (Harikambhoji)*. Even as he opened his mouth to sing, a ripple of laughter ran through the assembly. Someone nearby with a sarcastic grin asked him to wind up. Vasudeva hung his head down in shame and looked at Seshanna, who covering his face with handkerchief was bubbling with uncontrollable laughter!

— Source: S. Krishnamoorthy, grandson.

\* \* \*

## HOW IS HE BENEFITED?

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (January 27, 1756 - December 5, 1791), the seventh swara (nishada) of his parents Leopold - Anna Maria Mozart, is among the select immortals of the World of Music both as a performing artiste and a composer. At five he composed, at seven he wrote violin sonatas and at eight symphony. He improvised instantaneously even as Papanasam Sivan composed and sang *Naan Oru Vilayaattu Bommaiya?* Mozart was master of the Mass and the Opera. His life was miserable and he got in tune with it a pauper's grave, not identified till date, at the tender age of thirty-five. He dedicated his genius to posterity but suffered misery, sorrow and disappointment since, in the words of Sir Thomas Beecham, 'musicians are not expected to live; and composers and



World is not so ungrateful as is projected. The only fault lies in that it waits for the maestro to suffer and die to make up its mind to recognise him. The world is now mad after Mozart's creations. In 1990, i.e., two centuries later, his manuscripts – neither signed nor dated – written in 1784–85 fetched £ 800,000 at the Sotheby (London) sales! Mozart!

**You are indeed rich! Cruelty cannot be harsher !!**

Only the sufferer knows what suffering implies. Michael Heydn another great composer was unable to complete the work of six duos; his salary was withheld and he was in distress. Without a whisper or a word, Mozart, who was on a visit, brought the duets written out in a fair copy with only the name of Michael Haydn and got it delivered relieving Haydn of his distress. The help was a secret till Mozart entered his pauper's grave !

It is interesting to mention that the original manuscript of Schumann Piano Concerto (with traces of Clara's hand in the autograph score) fetched a fabulous £ 880000 at Sotheby auctions. (Bernard Levin).

\* \* \*

## MEMORIALS:

- T. Chowdiah Memorial Hall in the shape of a violin at Bangalore.
- Mysore Vasudevacharya Bhavana, Mysore.
- Veena Seshanna Bhavana, Mysore - Gana Bharati.
- Musiri Subramania Ayyar Road, Madras.
- Papanasam Sivan Street, Madras.
- Naina Pillai Road. Kanchipuram .
- Swati Tirunal Music Academy, Trivandrum.
- Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar Academy.
- Subramania Bharati Memorial at Ettayapuram.
- Muthuswami Dikshitar Memorial, Ettayapuram.
- Classical Carnatic Trinity Birth Homes, Tiruvarur.
- Govinda Dikshitar – Iyen Street at Kumbakonam and statue at Pattiswaram.
- Sri Sadasiva Brahmendral Memorial, Nerur and statue at Tirugokarnam.
- Tiruvisanallur Sri Sridhara Ayyaval Home, Tiruvisanallur.
- Sri Bodhendra Swamigal Samadhi and Memorial, Govindapuram, Aduthurai.
- Sri Sadguru Swamigal Memorial, Marudhanallur, Kumbakonam.
- Sri Tyagaraja Swamigal Samadhi, Tiruvaiyaru.

Sri Ramalinga Swamigal's Abode of Siddhi, Vadalur.

Sri Upanishad Brahman Ashram, Agastyeswaram.

\* \* \*

## MINI GURUKULAVASA:

Gurukulavasa is dead; but is alive in the homes of some artistes such as –

T.N. Krishnan – Viji Krishnan Natarajan – Sriram.

Maharajapuram Santhanam – S. Ramachandran – S.Srinivasan.

Lalgudi Jayaraman – G.J.R. Krishnan – Vijayalakshmi.

Flautist Dr. Ramani – Atul Kumar – R. Tyagarajan

Shaikh Chinna Moulana and grandsons.

T.H. Vinaykaram - his son.

Generally nagaswara families.

\* \* \*

## SATSANGH INSPIRES:

- i. Papanasam Sivan with the privilege of an inspired poet-devotee quipped '*Nan Oru Vilayattu Bommaiya*' (Am I a mere plaything ? ) composed and sung on the Mada Street, Mylapore at the spur of the moment. That was *vaggeyakara par excellence*! Good atmosphere, environment, spiritually dedicated admirers around (*sat sangh*) kindle sparks of inspiration without ado. (If the Trinity were born near Kotwal chavadi, Madras now, how could they bring forth their spiritual ardour, poetic genius and intellectual fervour to play amidst the earthy din and dust ? )
- ii. Here is another occurrence. Devakottai Tyagabrahma Festival. Pudukottai Gopalakrishna Bhagavata was on his rounds through the main streets doing bhajan. Tiger Varadachariar and Mazhavarayanandal Subbarama Bhagavata heard of it and joined him. Together they created a temple of music on the road and made the occasion memorable with kritis, kirtans, neraval and swaras – a rich vocal concert on the road. A veritable public treat by titans! It was sat sangh that made a heaven of the place.

\* \* \*

## WHY PALLAVI AT CONCERTS?

' A good pallavi demands pre-planning with sidemen... The *sollu* should be right; *talakattu* should be appropriate. One false beat deprives the beauty of pallavi. Then why sing pallavi just for its sake ? '

Many may not believe that it was D.K. Jayaraman who told *Sruti* (No.78) so. So concert is reduced to just an *avial* of sorts without the serious exercise of a

pallavi, the acme of musical expertise and excellence. Artistes never had rehearsals of pallavi before concerts; and how could there be rehearsals where it is an exercise in vibrant creativity, intuition and innovation? Patnam Subramania Ayyar or Ariyakudi Ramanuja Ayyangar, reputed to be the authors of the concert pattern now in vogue, would not have envisaged canoeing in shallow ponds which is the concomitant of the 'one false beat' apprehension'.

Now judge it in the context of the high standards of music and musical appreciation in the days of the tamil epic '*Manimekhalai*'. Prince Udayakumaran enquires of Ettikumaran the reason for his sadness. Replies Etti:

" My Lord, I saw the beautiful damsel Manimekhalai walking to the flower garden dressed as a nun. I felt sad; the sadness resulted in my fingers slipping on the yazh producing a false note. It has made me sadder. "

Etti was not a professional musician but was just a merchant! Yet he is so agitated over a single false note!

Can it be assumed that the Sangita Kalanidhi (DKJ) had been erroneously reported (even as some political statements are dealt with)?

\* \* \*

## HOW THE WIND BLOWS:

The concert programmes of some prominent sabhas in Madras for 1990-91 and 1991-92 Festival Season present the following broad indications so far as they pertain to top artistes:

- i. Vocalists dominate. Lesser the number of concerts, greater is the measure of dominance – 57% to 81% in 90-91 and 68% in 91–92.
- ii. Larger the number of concerts, wider is the variety with instrumentalists availing of the additional opportunities. Violin, flute, veena and gottuvadyam take concerts in a descending order approximately with 10, 8 and lesser per centages.
- iii. The one-man artiste dominated mandolin takes the first rank, no series being complete without it! Surely the tamil proverb '*Onda vanda pidari, oor pidariyai virattiydham*' (the refugee-ghost drove out the resident-ghost) applies to it and veena has suffered grievously in the blitz. To resurrect the golden past of veena –

' Dakshinamurty, the incarnation of Lord Siva, Matangi, Saraswati, Narada and Hanuman were the first who played veena, which has been there from Vedic times. The major schools of veena – Thanjavur, Mysore, Travancore and Andhra – innovated new techniques and methods in plucking and rendering kritis. There is wonderful response for learning veena among Russians. Veena has inherent quality, sweet

melody but the contact mike should be done away with. '

— V. Rajagopalan.

' Veena is ideally suited to produce the subtle microtones, a characteristic of Carnatic music. Veena and vocal sounds are so complementary to each other that a gayaka with a knowledge of veena is always more impressive.'

— Dr. V. Doreswami Iyengar.

' He who knows the secret of veena music is an expert in srutis and their varieties, understands tala also; and reaches the path of salvation without exertion.'

— Yagnavalkya Smriti

' Veena has more karvai, more gathram, more depth and volume. '

— Veena Balachander.

\* \* \*

## RIDDLE

Amir Khusro (1253 – 1325) was a true patriot, artiste and poet. A scorching sun and his parched throat during one of his journeys spot out four maidens drawing water from a well. Khusro makes a request for water. The girls knowing his identity demand of him with their wonted youthful affront a poem on such disparate items as ksheer (sweetened rice), charka (spinning wheel), dhol (drum) and kuttha (dog) – each of them proposing one. Genial Khusro pleads for water first, poem next. If maiden's husband is above par, maiden's imaginative flights are domineering and they insist on ' Poem first; water next '. What can he do before loving pranks of innocent kids ? He surrenders. Since his thirst is acute, he gives a succinct poem —

' With great difficulty was sweetened rice prepared  
by burning the spinning wheel;  
a dog came and ate it up.  
Now you sit and play a drum !  
Water, give me water dear. ! '

\* \* \*

## FIRST ROW:

Concert starts but the vocalist's face does not exhibit enthusiasm and his eyes scan for something.

Violinist : Lost anything or not well?

Vocalist : The first row: yes, those habitués who invariably applaud each phrase generously. Strangely they are not there and my voice falters!

\* \* \*

## BACK ROW :

Vocalist elaborates: 'Endaro Mahanubhavulu... Enda ro... Enda... row...'

Shouts from rear : 'Back row! Back row!'

('Endaro becomes 'Enda' (which) and 'ro' becomes 'row'. Phonetic puns.)  
— Cartoon in *Sruti*.

\* \* \*

## FOREIGNERS AND INDIAN ART

Eminent musicologist T.V. Subba Rao said that the saying 'East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet' is perhaps most applicable to music. It is an issue which calls for a penetrating, unbiased research. John Higgins, Ludwig Pesch and others learnt Carnatic Classical music with admirable fervour and a will to succeed. There are scores who have taken to Indian dances. When non-Indians sing or dance, do they bring out the inherent *bhava and rasa* of the songs and tunes and do they invest their rendition or dance with character and integrity? Here are some considered views:

'Foreigners learning Indian dances can achieve technical proficiency. Only when they can imbibe or at least understand the Indian way of life, can they bring *bhav, ras* and depth to their performance. I am not saying they don't dance well. But, why do we forgive them so much just because they look so nice when they are dressed up? We're a colour-conscious people. Why do we feel obliged just because it is a foreigner who had learnt our art form? They're doing it because they want it.'

— Kiran Sehgal in *E.T.* 04 02 1991.

'The musical system originated in India. And Indian music, the fire that burns heart and soul, is superior to the music of any other country. Foreigners even after a stay of thirty to forty years in India cannot play a single Indian tune correctly.'

— Amir Khusrau in '*Nuh Siphir*' — The Nine Skies.

'Raja Ravi Varma, the pioneering Indian genius in the art of oil painting, requested the Maharajah and his Consort to give a sitting. This they did with pleasure. And the result was highly flattering to both... the portraits painted by an European Master paled visibly before the work of their own protege. The foreigner could only transcribe their likenesses whereas the Indian could **invest them with character** too.'

— '*Raja Ravi Varma*' — Kerala Government Monograph.

**Research in depth is indicated.**

\* \* \*

## TIRUPUGAZH BANNED?

Believe it or not, yes. Before the First World War. In his Foreword to the '*Life of Vallimalai Tirupugazh Swamigal*', H.H. B.V. Narasimha Swamigal writes under

date February 28, 1951:

'About forty years ago... I heard first of police seizing *Tirupugazh* copies... (thinking) that these songs had a highly sensuous and often libidinous tendencies... too.'

— Quoted at page 6 of '*Thava Chelvargal Varalaru*' by R. Kalyanasundaram.

Another composition met with a similar fate! Bangalore Nagarathinammal reprinted the telugu classic '*Radhika Swayamvaram*' of Muddupalani (18th century). Taking note of its eroticism, police seized all the copies. Only with the advent of popular government taking powers in 1947, the ban was lifted and in 1952, it was reprinted.

\* \* \*

## MUSICAL THERAPY:

Sobbing comely young lady	:	' Doctor, of late my hus does everything in fits and starts. Has no worries and yet he acts so... Am anxious...
Psychiatrist	:	Does he do everything in fits and starts ?
Lady (smiling through tears)	:	Yes, it is so. Everything in fact. Starts but stops... Resumes only to stop for varying durations...Strangely...
Psychiatrist	:	How long is he so?
Lady	:	Ever since he joined that light music orchestra last month.
Psychiatrist	:	Oh! Then no worry. It's just a hangover of his recent orchestral practices. When he returns home, you ask him to play <i>Najivadara (Bilahari)</i> or <i>Darini Telusukonti (Suddha Saveri)</i> or <i>Nagumomu (Abheri)</i> . The continuity will chase away the hangover. Report after a fortnight.

**Report she did not.** Musical therapy was a marital success too.

There has been considerable research on different aspects of musical therapy. Please see Chapters II and VIII of '*A Garland*'. It is recorded that Rampur Nawab Ali Khan was cured of paralysis by playing *Jujawanti* raga for three years and Jehangir used four tamburş in his bedroom to induce sleep. Haridas Swami is reported to have cured some ailment of Akbar's queen with music. Ibn Sena, an Arabic writer is stated to have dealt with musical therapy in detail. Sri Ganapati Sacchitananda Swami, Dutta Peetham, Mysore has been doing much research. Therapy is decided for each individual case. He says that other musicians too can cure 'but only if brahmacharya, ekagrata, ashta siddhis, mastery of voqa besides knowledge are attained'.

Dr. S.M. Chennabasavanna, NIMHANS observes that the nature of cure, duration and extent have to be defined; then only can one say how effective the cure is. Prof. S.K. Ramachandra Rao opines that for those having an aptitude for music, it may help, as not all will enjoy music.

It is stated that Nordoff-Robbins Music Therapy Centre, London uses music therapy to unlock minds and bodies of handicapped children based on the work and teachings of Dr. Paul Nordoff and Dr. Clive Robbins to draw the handicapped or emotionally disturbed into a shared musical experience in pursuit of therapeutic goals. 'Nearly all can be helped by music therapy, although it is not a cure.' Musicians of professional standards with practical training in therapeutics attend to this. Late Benjamin Britten, Yehudi Menuhin and a host of prominent musicians support the work.

The annals of music abound with episodes of man, animal, bird, nay, even the nature getting enchanted and charmed by music. Here is a specific case from the pen of Sir William Jones, Founder-President of the Asiatic Society, Calcutta written in 1784:

'I have been assured by a credible eyewitness that two wild antelopes used often to come from their woods to the place where a more savage beast, Sirajuddullah entertained himself with concerts and that they listened to the strains with an appearance of pleasure, till the monster, in whose soul there was *musick*, shot one of them to display his archery.'

**Note:** J.A. Freude had rightly said, 'Wild animals never kill for sport. Man is the only one to whom the torture and death of the fellow creatures is amusing in itself.' Samuel Butler, however, humourously compliments man stating, 'Man is the only animal that can remain on friendly terms with the victims he intends to eat until he eats them!' There is enough material to state that music has influence on animals.

\* \* \*

## MUSICIANS & PUBLIC OFFICES:

T. Lakshmana Pillai	was Member, Legislative Council, Trivandrum.
T. Chowdiah, Mysore	was Member, Legislative Council, Karnataka (1952).
Tiruvizhimalalai Subramania Pillai	was Member, Mayiladuturai Municipal Council and District Board, Tanjore.
K.B. Sundarambal	was Member, Legislative Council, Madras.
Bidaram Krishnappa	was Municipal Councillor.

\* \* \*

## SHORTEST PALLAVIS:

Gama, the celebrated Indian wrestler (1880–1960) floored Stanislaus Zybszko, a former world champion in 21 seconds on January 28, 1920 at Patiala and sat on the chest of the mammoth, prostrate Pole as one sees Krishna on Kamsa in pictures. Boxer Mike Tyson of peculiar fame knocked out Michael Spinks in just 91 seconds in 1988.

Carnatic musicians have sought to outsmart them in pallavi rendition! The shortest was by Semmangudi Dr. Srinivasa Ayyar at the Music Academy, Madras during the 1939–40 Festival. It was for just 45 seconds! He holds the record still and may hold it *ad infinitum* as pallavi stands ostracised now. Having conceded the 'gold' to the Bhishma of Carnatic music, who has an uninterrupted record of concerts from 1926 to 1992 (66 years), Musiri Subramania Ayyar lifted the 'silver' with a pallavi rendition of two minutes!

These two pallavis are reported to have been recorded by Kalki in *Ananda Vikatan*. (*Sruti* No.6) *A Garland* gives at page 475 a list of pallavi specialists of yester years. They are sure to collapse of cardiac arrest if they hear of these as 'even in ashes live their wonted Fires'.

\* \* \*

## PERCUSSIVE ELOQUENCE:

' Now a split-second pause,  
Now a false start,  
Now a rogue flourish,  
Now a sustained fusillade with an uncertain beginning and uncertain end;  
Now an unexpected change of gati, a tisram, a khandam, a misram,  
Now a chatusram in khandam; Now this ...Now that... '

– K.P. Ramakrishnan in *Sruti* 35

## Who could that percussionist be?

' That number one was without a second;  
To praise whom there is a drought of adjectives;  
He was wizard, maestro, stalwart, genius – all in one.  
He planted Palghat on the musical map of India and  
Carried the title 'Sangita Kalanidhi' for a percussionist first.'

\* \* \*

## SELF PRAISE ?

The Indian mastered several languages, assimilated diverse cultures like a blotting paper and absorbed fragments of alien architecture and arts and made them his own. He has achieved on foreign soil what he had not done on native soil like a transplanted crop. N.A. Palkhiwallah said on November 7, 1990:



'The Indian instinct is innate in Indian genes.  
He can buy from a Jew and sell to a Scot and yet make a profit.'

Does the balance of trade in music confirm it? Does performance justify self-praise?

\* \* \*

## WIFE-BEATER ?

'A critic once described Balachander as one wedded to veena but unfortunately, a wife-beater! But even the worst critic of Balachander would admit that the occasional, apparent harshness of his technique was the result not of hatred as in the case of wife-beaters but his total devotion to, identification with and involvement in the instrument. The response of the instrument to his touch amply proved that the wife found his caresses more than adequate compensation for his apparent harshness!

— P.K. Doraiswar

\* \* \*

## PADACCHEDAM (SPLITTING OF WORDS):

To adhere to rhythm or for easy rendition, musicians split up words in songs (lyrics) as in –

*Entara... nithana* (Harikambhoji)

*Sivudanoma.. dhavudano* (Devamrutavarshini)

*Dantuni kainave...dhantuni* (Sama)

*Paramesa Vasishtapara...cara Narada*, (instead of  
*Paramesa Vasishta Paracara Narada*). (Lalitha)

Mangudi vidwan was a musicologist and linguist too. He was scrupulous about theoretical injunctions and would never stoop to split up words even when they do not affect the meaning. But he prospered not! (The cine song says that one left off the difficult job of a cook to become a musician.) Mangudi traditionally switched over to priesthood as **many of the past musicians came out of priest families** and the change-over was easy. Sangeet–Sanskrit coparcenary was a significant factor of the past. It was his first job presiding over a wedding in a man's house. He was chanting the *aseervadam* (benediction or epithalamium). Instead of the usual –

'Omsan... thissan.. thissan... thih',

he used to chant the following beautiful anaphoric

*'Om Santih... Santih... Santih' .'*

Lo! What happened ? The newly-wed girl broke away from the warmth of her just-wedded spouse, ran down the staircase to the utter bewilderment of all. With visible annoyance and ingenuous shame, she protested in whispers to the priest,

' Why, uncle, did you call me ? Just now I went with him.  
And you call me so loudly and now, see, everyone stares at me ! '

Sensitive Santi (that was her name) broke into copious tears. In the meanwhile the perplexed Jack had also come down tumbling after his Jill. Instead of the benedictory *Santih* (*Cantih* – *peace*), there was flutter and tension. The priest sighed and soliloquised:

*'Padacchedam! You drove me out of music ;  
Now you are driving me from priesthood too ! '*

Utter economic distress drove him to shout with vehemence at the next wedding :

*'Omsan...thissan...thissan...thih'.*

Bridal couple enjoyed their new-found warmth and drank deep the exhilaration of '*thissan*' benediction. People were happy. Gods too were perhaps pleased as the couple are now happy. All understand only neo-classical '*thissan*' language. (*Vide* Part III-B too on this subject.)

\* \* \*

## THE ORIGINAL STUFF:

The artiste started singing. Local pervert Mangudi Mundan was frequently tossing taunts to the disconcert and wrath of the musician:

' Ah, that brika is from Madurai Mani. '...  
' Sabash, how he copies Ariyakudi ! '...  
' Fine, tsou, tsou, sure that is GNB. '...

The musician lost patience and shouted, ' You get out '. Mangudi Mundan was all appreciation and smile and said,

**' At long last, that is sure your original ! '**

And he left.

Note: Mangudi Mundan's exercise brings to mind Fred Allen's joke —

' He is a good boy. Everything he steals, he brings home to his mother ! '

In music, the artiste is not found fault with for imitating the styles of others but

actually it is complimentary to him ! That the Art has licensed ! It is all for the pleasure of the audience.

\* \* \*

## SACRIFICIAL GOAT:

Vasudevacharya was taking leave of Patnam Subramania Ayyar after gurukulavasa. The guru made some nostalgic references:

'One thing about your Mysore State is terrible! They squeezed my huge body into a long black coat, tied an upper cloth tightly round my waist, placed a pot-like heavy turban on my head and drove me like a helpless sacrificial goat and they ordered me to sing! Vasu, even now, I perspire when I think of it !'

\* \* \*

## FUNNIEST CHAP!

'It is a funny world and the funniest chap you ever saw is He – the Beloved Infinite! Fun, is it not? Brotherhood or playmatehood – a school of romping children let out to play in the playground of the world! Whom to praise, whom to blame, it is all His play. They want explanation, but how can you explain Him ? He is brainless, nor has He any reason. He is fooling us with little brains and reason..'

— Swami Vivekananda (July 6, 1896)

Tyagaraja addresses Rama as father, mother, friend, etc. in several songs. *Sitamma Mayamma (Lalitha)* is a special song in which he becomes one among Rama's family. Vivekananda's description of 'romping children' finds place in *Nayeda Vanchana (Nabhomani)* where Tyagaraja portrays himself as a boy harassed by others in the street/ *Rama Ninuvina (Sankarabharanam)* and *Rama Nipai (Kedara)* are songs in this vein.

\* \* \*

## CURSE OF 'AHIRI':

'Sing raga *Ahiri* and lose your dinner' is an oft-repeated saying. The flautist of the Cauvery Delta was not prepared to swallow what was not supported by Bharata, Matanga or Somanatha. Determined to prove the absurdity of the saying at the next concert at Terizhandur, he carried a packet of chosen delicacies. (He chose Terizhandur as he was an admirer of Poet Kambar who hailed from that place and as he wanted the saying to be erased from human memory even as the temple car – *Ter* – was lost in that place.) Taking cue from the Mahabharata episode of Arjuna secreting his weapons at the top of a tree, he tied up his food packet at the top of a bamboo tree which was found bent in the

morning. He made extensive exposition in raga *Ahiri* at the concert and rushed back to the bamboo tree with a Caesar's pride and exultation.

Lo! To his consternation he found that the bamboo had straightened (in the heat of the sun) like a flagstaff and the packet was seen safe and sure at the top of it. How can he scale a slim bamboo having just then elaborately and successfully scaled the *ati tara sthayi* of *Ahiri* raga. There were as many and more thorns on the bamboo than the gamakas he released at the concert ! So ' the Curse of Ahiri ' is real, he lamented on an empty belly at last. It is said that Ahiri raga was being sung at some temples during the *ardhajama* (final night services) only to get over possible effects of the curse !

\* \* \*

### DARPANA!

Aged mother : Your disciple is doing ' *tarpana* ' today since the morning. Is it to music or to your guruship ?

Musician : Not *tarpana*, mother. It is *Darpana* – a musical treatise.

Note : This reminds the author of the disastrous cricket tour for the World Cup 1992. An aged lady queried :

' Commentary mentions a Sastri frequently.  
What has a Sastri \* to do there ? '

Grandson settled it thus:

' Grandma, we are losing everything everywhere.  
The Indian team has wisely taken a (Ravi) Sastri to perform *tarpanas* on the spot after each match ! '

\* [Sastri = Priest]

\* \* \*

### HONOUR WITH A DIFFERENCE:

Nagaswara artiste Namagiripettai Krishnan was honoured with a very costly shawl at Paris by an admirer. Function over, the admirer requested for its return saying that it was very costly and that he had been using it for all visiting dignitaries in the fields of politics, art, etc.

Krishnan silently returned it richer by the knowledge gained. Admirer got the credit; the artiste got the honour; and all at no cost! A new chapter in musiconomics

(Source: *Kumudam*)

\* \* \*

## ‘VENI, VIDI, VICI’:

Many have achieved this on their debut like:

Apostle Sambandar.	Veena Seshanna
Sarabha Sastri, Flautist	M.S. Subbulakshmi, Vocalist.
Pushpavanam, Vocalist.	Ravi Kiran, Chitra Veena artiste.
T.N. Rajarathinam, Nagaswara artiste.	Mandolin Srinivas.
T.R. Mahalingam @ Mali, Flautist.	Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar, Vocalist.
Palghat Mani, Mridangist.	Shashank, Flautist.
G.N. Balasubramaniam, Vocalist.	Tiruvarur Rajayee, Vocalist

\* \* \*

## DIKSHITAR INSPIRED BY SHAHAJI?

The group songs of Dikshitar on Sri Neelothpalamba are all in ragas ending with Goula, i.e., Narayanagoula, Ritigoula, Kannadagoula, Kedaragoula, Goula, Malavagoula, Purvagoula and Chayagoula. Shahaji had used all these except Goula in his *Sapthasagara Sooladi Prabhanda Leela*.

— P.S. Srinivasan in ‘Shanmukha’ 10/90.

\* \* \*

## Dr. M.S. SUBBULAKSHMI:

‘ Smt. Subbulakshmi, gifted with a voice that was a rare amaigam of the melodious and the meditative, created the spell by natural charm. Her mastery over the medium held the purity and depth of feeling of the original composer, the lilt and poignancy of the primal invoker and the power of transforming a private experience into collective illumination. She is not a mere Queen of Songs. She is the most enchanting raga breezing across this world. She is Sangeetha Saraswati. ’

— Citation for ‘Konarak’

‘ Smt. Subbulakshmi’s range in music is encyclopaedic and her repertoire catholic. The healing power of music is evident in her performance. ’

— S.S. Barnala.

‘ I commend Subbulakshmi to the people of the North. I want my living words to go to the uttermost corners of the world so that people may realise how one great woman artiste in India has been able to move the hearts of millions by her songs. ’

— Sarojini Naidu appearing in the film ‘ Meera ’ introduced her thus.

\* \* \*

## WEST AND EAST: (POST PLUS BELLE!) :

- A. Wallajahpet Venkataramana Bhagavatar (1781–1874) walked daily from Ayyampet to Tiruvaiyaru with his basket of 'tulsi' (sacred basil) for his guru Tyagarajah's poojahs and his own enlightenment. Even so, Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) walked thirty miles from Llinberg to Hamburg almost daily at the age of fifteen to hear Organist Bohm. - He was a self-instructor, self-helper and hard worker. His income depended on special fees for wedding, funerals, etc. When the year was mild and fewer people died, he was in distress. So too were men of his tribe. If Indian musicians rarely touched affluence in the past, it was so in the West too.

Bach was buried without a memorial! Only after 144 years, his coffin was discovered and reinterred in the Church. Mozart (1756–1791) was laid to rest, where none knew and none followed to the grave!

G.F. Handel (1685–1759), as an infant, yearned for a keyboard but his father, a barber–surgeon forbade it. Having risen himself far above his beginning, he looked forward to a further elevation. **To become a musician was deemed to be a fall to a lower depth than a copper–healer.** Musicians like Bach and Haydn were counted only as dependent, poorly paid vassals who could be treated with coolness. It was the custom of the day in Europe that the incoming organist should take the post with the retiring man's daughter. (POST PLUS BELLE!)

- B. Muthuswamy Dikshitar left none as son or daughter while Tyagaraja's grandson died prematurely without issues. Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar surrendered his marital pleasures at the altar of *Nadayoga*. Uthukadu Bard was a recluse. The list is long. Their geniuses thus ended in *cul de sac*. Great families had disappeared like rivers in the Sahara. [Bach, Handel and Purcell were near-contemporaries of Shahaji, Uthukadu Bard, Arunachala Kavi and Thulajaji while Beethoven, Heydn and Mozart were near–contemporaries of the Carnatic Trinity.] The family of Bach was the most affluent in numbers:

'Hail to the Bachs, surely the grandest of all musical tribes. It goes back to about 1560; the last expired in 1871. Bach was the eighth. It is curious that of his 20 children, only one took the lineage past 1818 and most surprising of all, not one of the four children of the last productive.'

— Pelican 'Lives of Great Composers' 1935.

## PUBLICITY STUNT !

'At a Delhi concert, Balamurali Krishna said that he would not sing if there were critics in the auditorium and I went out with pleasure ! Years later in 1975, Balamurali conferred the title of 'Vimarsaka Sudharnava' on me and explained that people might think that there was no love lost between us, that it was not the truth and that the show of strain was only to provide fuel to publicity !'

— Subbudu in *Kalki D.M.* 1986.

' Any publicity is good publicity. Do something terrible and then make amends. '

\* \* \*

## SEEKERS OF KNOWLEDGE !

'After the first concert I gave at Odessa, one and all asked me specifically **what** fingering I had used in such and such a passage . . . engulfed by a gigantic crowd of students, ex-students and professors – rather than by the heterogenous audience.'

— Yehudi Menuhin

How the practice obtains in India is relevant! Menuhin mentions that the relation between the instrument and the instrumentalist should be that between Don Quixote and his inseparable steed.

\* \* \*

## THE DOUBT & THE REVELATION :

Berlin: April 12, 1929. Thirteen-year old Yehudi Menuhin appears to play the challenging concerts of Bach, Beethoven and Brahms. He hands over the violin to the concert master for tuning. 'A ripple of surprise runs through the audience. So, he cannot even tune the violin by himself ! ... The first vigorous notes of Bach dispel all doubts. The sounds are as pure as gold, inspired by an angelic naturalness of phrasing and musicality and without a trace of childishness.'

' **Now I know that there is a God in Heaven** ', said Albert Einstein after the concert.

\* \* \*

## TRIBUTE OVERDUE :

Boswell recorded, 'Covent Garden, the very place where I was fortunate enough to be introduced to the illustrious subject of this work ( Samuel Johnson) deserves to be particularly marked. I never pass by it without feeling reverence and regret.'

Gopala Krishna Bharati, author of the immortal opera *Nandanar* and trail - blazer to Mahatma Gandhiji and Subramania Bharati spent his entire time on the pials of some houses as a bachelor dedicating his life to musical compositions in tamil and the Lord. The author approached the Government (as it was constituted before and now) to provide a plaque on the pial of the house at Mayuram near Sri Mayuranathaswami Temple. It may cost much less than Rs. 1000/-. The author could do it himself but that will not be public recognition of that venerable crusader. ( He has provided a copy of the photo of the house and a full copy of his life from *A Garland* with his letters.) 111 years had passed. It is not too late.

**Hundred and eighty—one year old Bharati seems to smile at the author as if to say, ' They will not do it. Forget it all ' !**

\* \* \*

## CONTRACTION OF NAMES :

Contracting names is an art in certain parts of the country like Tanjore district. Thus Srinivasan becomes Seenu, Narayanaswamy gets axed to Nanu, Padmanabhan is reduced to Paddhu and Ramachandran to Ramu. The art takes other forms too by indenting on physical appearance, native village, etc. Eminent musicians are thus called Koneri Vaitha, Mudicondan Venkatta, etc. Boswell records that Samuel Johnson had a similar way and called Boswell as Bozzy, Sheridan as Sherry. Thus he had called Goldsmith Goldy but Goldy did not take to it kindly and, displeased that such a liberty should be taken with his name, said:

' I have often desired him not to call me Goldy. '

\* \* \*

## CRITICS :

'I had another dream the other day about music critics. They were small and rodent-like with padlocked ears, as if they had slipped out of a painting by Goya'

— Igor Stravinsky.

(Note : Lucientes Goya was a Spanish painter who etched macabre and



'A critic is a man who knows the way but can't drive the car.'

— Kenneth Tynan

'Insects sting, not from malice but because they want to live. It is the same with critics – they desire our blood, not our pain.'

— F.W. Nietzsche.

**Note :** Please see page 453 of *A Garland* too. It may be safely asserted that critics in the field of Carnatic music are as constructive and good as the music and the musicians they deal in and with.

\* \* \*

### 'BHAVA' IN THE WEST :

'Can't you read ? The score demands *con amore* (vibrant enthusiasm) and what are you doing? You are playing it like married men ! '

— A rebuke from Arturo Toscanini

\* \* \*

### MUSICIAN, a NEOSATANIST ?

Greek Orthodox Church leaders have declared the U.S. pop music idol, Michael Johnson, as a neosatanist at the Fourth Pan - Orthodox Conference at Kalavrita (sanskrit origin?) on the Peloponnese. They declared that Jackson was a product of devil and an incarnation of evil apparently for calling himself an "ambassador of light" !

(The 'Hindu' 8/92)

Has Indian music world produced any such instance ?

\* \* \*

### HO(S)TEL?

If temples were the nerve-centres for propagation of music, several hotels too had provided congenial background and hospitality for the constant gatherings of musicians in the first half of this century. If musicians wanted peaceful discussions, get-together, etc., they flocked to these hotels without any need to touch their purses :

Mylapore – Sastri Hotel (M.S. Krishna Ayyar, proprietor, wrote many books and articles including one on Tyagaraja and sponsored hundreds of concerts and bhajans.)

Triplicane	– Coimbatore Krishnaier Hotel
Tanjore	– Gopalaswamy Ayyar's Ananda Lodge.
Trichy	– Perur Narayana Ayyar Hotel. (He was a mridangist.)

Sowcarpet – Ayyaswami Ayyar Hotel  
 Trichy – Mridangam Rajagopala Ayyar's Saravana Bhavan.

And many more.

\* \* \*

## NOTHING SURPASSES MUSIC:

' Japa koti gunām dhyānam;  
 Dhyāna koti guno layā;  
 Laya koti gunām gānam;  
 Gānāth paratharam nahi. '

(Meditation equals recitation of the Lord's name a crore times.  
 Layam equals a crore dhyanam.  
 Pure sublime music is equivalent to layam ten million times.  
 But, lo, nothing can surpass the greatness of music.

— Sanskrit verse (translation by RR.)

\* \* \*

## VIOLIN — A PEEP INTO ITS PAST:

' The violin faces us with a problem ... It can be said that at a given date it was not there at all; and shortly afterwards, it is found full-fledged in active life. '

— Gerald R. Hayes in *Musical Instruments*.

' The origin of violin is uncertain. No one can claim to have invented it. Suddenly it is present. In 1529-30 the Italian artist Gaudenzio Ferrari painted an angel playing on violin. '

' The violin was the passport, purse and the path to the summit of society. '

— Yehudi Menuhin.

' Our scriptures and pictures have extolled veena. If violin was known in ancient times, how would it have been dealt with and how would it have fared vis-a-vis veena in scriptures and pictures ? '

— MNR.

(Vide pages Lx and 58 in *A Garland*.)

\* \* \*

## MIKE :

' Our shop is fully air-conditioned ', advertises the jeweller proudly and gullible clients swallow the pill. None asks, 'A.C. ? For whom and at whose cost ? '

In yester decades, handbills and advertisements prominently announced 'Mike arrangements made'. Veena Balachander has written that it would appear that the sponsors had sworn to that. With the mike went the robust voice of vocalists which traversed the three octaves ! None sought for it. It was imposed.

\* \* \*

## A FORGOTTEN CONCEPT — ART NOT FOR SALE ?

- i. This is from the pen of Sangita Kalanidhi K. Vasudevacharya of Mysore in his 'Memoirs':

'I happened once to listen to a performance of the famous Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar arranged in a rich zamindar's house at Tiruvaiyaru. It started with the song '*Chintaya ma Kandamulaskandam (Bhairavi)*'. The audience sat spellbound. The zamindar anxious to hear a particular song gave a chit with due respect indicating the song to Ayyar's brother Ramaswamy Sivan. Glancing through the chit, Sivan went red with rage and ordered his brother to pack up; and to the consternation of the zamindar and the audience, walked off saying that **they were not there to cater for money** and satisfy desires and that the artiste had the liberty and right to sing what he thought best and could not be bamboozled with money ! '

- ii. T. Sankaran recounts a similar episode. A rich vidwan came to discuss some 'laya' issues with Konnakol Pakkiri Pillai of Mannargudi and placed some gold before the percussion wizard as he opened his talks. Instant was Pillai's reaction stung to the quick by the mercenary approach of the visitor. He said:

'What do I know that is not already known to you. Don't waste your treasure. Take it with you and leave me. '

- iii. C. Cuniah, drama tycoon, planned to stage '*Rama Pattabhishekam*' for the 1008th time and requested Naina Pillai to sing a song or two on the occasion but without swaras. The remuneration was Rs. 1000 (now about Rs. one lakh). The Achilles who steadfastly adhered to his principles declined stating that to sing a song without swara would never be 'Ramarpana' and that he could not relax his stand for the lure of money! An Andhra zamindar offered him Rs. two thousand (now Rs. Two lakhs) for a concert but without his usual 'Full Bench'. He could have only mridangam and violin as per his choice. 'I am not mad after money; nor a slave of that. Any proposal not in conformity with my own principles face rejection.' And it was rejected.

- iv. Concert over, the landlord gave the 'tamboolam' with Rs. seventy-five to Violinist Tiruvalangadu Sundaresa Ayyar. He took Rs.35 and returned the balance! That was in 1938. No wonder he was held in high esteem (Ellarvi). Veena Balachander has penned a panegyric verse on his eminence.

\* \* \*

# E

## MUSICIANS AND MUSIC

### SWARASTANA VARNAM :

Ramaswami Dikshitar's *Swarastana Pada Varnam* in *Todi* using only the seven letters *sa, ri, ga, ma, pa, dha, ni* is reported to be the only composition of the type in Carnatic music.

Raga: *Todi*                      Talam : *Adi*

Pallavi :  
Sarigāni dāni pāmarini nī pada  
Samāgamamāga nīganinisā.

I Anupallavi :  
Garimamadāri padāri sadāri  
Gamapadanīdānigā nidāni pasagani.

II Caranam :  
Marimari ganisāga nipani dagadani  
Mānigāniga nimmanigādā  
Marī nī pathama manigā marīnigā  
Manali Vēnkatakrśnēndra nātonu.

Dr. P.P. Narayanaswami, '*Sangeetham*'  
& Muthuswami Dikshitar *Keerthanaigal*.

\* \* \*

### PRABANDHA :

Prabandha is a musical composition governed by rules on raga, tala, metre, vṛtta, six angas (swara, biruda, pada, tenaka, pata and tala) and four dhatus. If prabandha be the forerunner to musical compositions of later days, Matanga is the father of desi prabandhas. Matanga is the first musicologist to use the word raga in Ragakadambaka or Ragamalika.

– (Dr. S. Seetha)

\* \* \*

### NAYAK :

The honorific 'Nayak' was the highest title a musician could in yester eras aspire for and it was awarded (for intrinsic ability and positive achievements) collectively by musicians after satisfying themselves of the true merits and

attainments of the awardee. B.S. Sitholey, quoted by Gowri Kuppaswamy and M. Hariharan, states that India has had only eight nayaks. viz.,

Baiju Nayak	Rajah Mansingh of Gwalior
Gopal Nayak	Bakshu Nayak of Gujarat
Bhagavan Nayak	Husain Sharqu of Jaunpur and
Jargu Nayak	Baz Bharat of Malwa.

Presumably the title was confined to the North.

\* \* \*

## CATEGORIES :

- A. 'O ARJUNA, four types of devotees worship Me, viz.,  
the seeker after worldly possessions or wealth,  
the afflicted, the dissatisfied,  
the seeker of (systematised) knowledge and  
the wise - the man of wisdom'.  
— (*Bhagavad Gita* - VII - 16)

The classification applies to *Nadopasakas* (musical artistes) too. Eg.

- i The Afflicted : Arunagirinathar, Marimutha Pillai, Muthu Thandavar, Ramaswami Dikshitar.
- ii Seekers of knowledge : Rajah Reghunatha Naik  
Rajah Thulajaji  
Swati Tirunal  
Dr. U.Ve. Swaminatha Ayyar  
T.L. Venkatarama Ayyar  
Harikesanallur Muthiah Bhagavatar.
- iii Men of Wisdom : Purandara Dasa  
Annamacharya  
The Carnatic Musical Trinity  
Bhagavatha Mahapurushas. — Quintuplets.

In the *Gita*, the Lord declares, 'I am extremely dear to the Jnani, the Man of Wisdom' - No wonder. May their tribe increase !

- iv Seekers of worldly possessions are naturally many.
- B. Abhinaya comprises *Angika* (Movements and gestures)  
*Vachika* (Speech and dialogue)  
*Aharya* (Make up and costumes) and  
*Sattvika* (aesthetic experience).

Musicians may likewise be classified too (the names given are only representative):

i. Prone to movements and gestures : *Angika*:

Tiger Varadachariar	Neyveli Santhanagopalan
Semmangudi Dr.Srinivasa Ayyar	Kunnakudi Vaidyanathan
T.K.Govinda Rao	

ii. Known for their sartorial elegance : *Aharya*:

Harikesanallur Muthiah Bhagavatar	T.R. Subramaniam
Ariyakudi Ramanuja Ayyangar	Balamurali Krishna
T. Chowdiah	Mandolin Srinivas
Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar	G.N. Balasubramaniam

iii. Who visibly enjoy their own rendition : *Sattvika* :

Madurai Mani Ayyar  
Veena S. Balachander  
Ravikiran

iv. Who wear a stoic expression at concerts :

Palghat Mani Ayyar  
Dr. Ramani, flautist

v. Who fill up gaps due to voice constraints by gestures :

Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar  
D.K. Jayaraman

vi. Who feel at home and delight in upper octave (Homa Birds) :

S.G. Kittappa,	K.B. Sundarambal
Musiri Subramania Ayyar,	T.R. Mahalingam
T.V. Sankaranarayanan.	

vii. Who are distinguishable by their distinct expressive decorum :

Mahakavi Subramania Bharati	T.L. Venkatarama Ayyar
Yesudas	The Lady Vocal Trinity (MSS, MLV, DKP).

## DEFECTS :

Venerable Subbarama Dikshitar, in his *Sangita Sampradaya Pradarsini* deals *in extenso* with *Sangita Lakshana Prachina Paddhati* and recounts as many as twenty-four defects found in vocalists:

- |     |           |   |   |
|-----|-----------|---|---|
| i.  | Sandashta | : | One who while singing appears like biting /clenching his teeth. |
| ii. | Utkrsta   | : | One who sings in a harsh, loud voice.                           |
|     |           |   | Udgushta is one who salivates or sweats profusely,              |

iii.	Bhita	:	One who sings with fear or timidity.
iv.	Sankita	:	One who sings rapidly and with uncertainty or diffidence.
v.	Kampita	:	One who sings shaking his body.
vi.	Vikala	:	One who sings with notes swerving from their sthanas or rattles.
vii.	Vitāla	:	One who sings out of tala .
viii.	Karabha	:	One who sings in a tone resembling that of a camel.
ix.	Udyudta	:	One who sings shaking the cheeks like a goat (cheek shake).
- x.	Jhompaka	:	One who sings in a manner that the veins protrude out in the neck.
xi.	Nimilaka	:	One who sings closing his eyes. Many come under this.
xii.	Virasa	:	One who sings without relishing the taste and mood of the raga and tune. Why does he sing at all ?
xiii.	Apasvara	:	One who sings out of sruti and out of swarasthana.
xiv.	Avyakta	:	One who sings altering and concealing the real voice. Not a few indulge in this.
xv.	Sthanabhrasta	:	One who sings without paying heed to the positions of the three octaves.
xvi.	Avyavasthita	:	One who sings deviating from the respective svarasthanas and that too shamelessly.
xvii.	Misraka	:	One who sings making a medley of raga.
xviii.	Anavadhana	:	One who sings deviating from the gamaka sthanas.
xix.	Anunaasika	:	One who sings with a nasal sound. Many.
xx.	Sutkari	:	One who sings with the sound 'ooz'. Nocturnal locomotives !
xxi.	Karali	:	One who sings terribly gaping the mouth or screwing up his visage.
xxii.	Tumbaki	:	One who sings bulging the cheek like a gourd.
xxiii.	Kaki	:	One who sings with a dry, rough and harsh voice like that of a crow.
xxiv.	Prasari	:	One who sings with mannerisms such as awkward shakes of the hands and other limbs without musical expressions.

(TSP & PKR in JMAM)

## BASICS

In his penetrating article titled '*Sangita Vishayam*', National poet Subramania Bharati gives the following suggestions. What he said eight decades back holds relevance even today.

- Musicians must bring new compositions to light.
- Music must be melodious and not percussive and accent must be on music rather than on tala.
- Women musicians should be encouraged as they possess natural talents, sweet voice and aptitude.

- d. Harmonium is an impediment to the growth of classical music.
- e. Tambura should be the only drone. Vina is the most suitable instrument for women to practise.
- f. Musicians should sing with full-throated abandon and not in a falsetto voice. (TSP)

### TIPS! TIPS!!

(a) Vainika-teacher M.A. Kalyanakrishna Bhagavatar outlines the sampradaya practice for vainikas thus:

- i. Present more gamakas in the avarohana.
- ii. Avoid too many meettus while developing a raga but ensure karvai.
- iii. Ensure meettus accord with sähitya aksharas.
- iv. Employ soft meettus for continuity.
- v. Have intensive practice to bring out on the strings the potential characteristics of human voice.

(The concerts of Balachander were an open lesson to emphasise the dedication, devotion, toil and perseverance required if veena concert is to be classic and classical.)

(b) Nagaswara maestro, P.S.Veeruswami Pillai gave these tips for trainees in nagaswaram :—

- i. Start initially in mandra madhyama as shadja and take swaravalis in *Malavagowla*.
- ii. Shift the tonic note later to madhya shadja.
- iii. Beginners to play as many as ten (10) avaratas of arohana and avarohana in one breath.
- iv. Hold the left little finger flexibly lest it should hamper and hinder other fingers' free play.

### "I learnt much " :

The eminent, cultured nagaswara maestro cites how the memorable performances of two great vidwans were highly instructive. Here are they:

- A. Ambal village near Mudicondan – Festival in progress. The deities were being taken in procession. Mannargudi Chinna Pakkiri Pillai was on nagaswaram with Ammapettai Pakkiri Pillai on tavil. It looked that they were made for each other, being wizards in melody and rhythm respectively. Chinna Pakkiri started with *Begada* raga after the brief *Mallari* at 10 p.m. The clock struck two but the nagaswara artiste was known to have ousted the hegemony and discipline of Time long back. He did not know that for four hours he was keeping melodic intimacy with *Begada* and the crowd did not know that they too had been standing for over 240 soothing, soul-nourishing minutes. Chinna Pakkiri quietly started on his pallavi and on a ragamalika after 4 a.m. He rounded off his rendition with *Varali*



conscious of the fact that 'Sankara, Narayana and Brahma attained their distinctive glory through *Nadopasana* – (*Nadopasanache* – *Begada raga*).'

- B. Madurai Ponnuswami Pillai started with two kirtanas at 7 p.m. and took up *Sri raga* at 8 p.m. It was 4 a.m. Yes, the procession of the wedded couple was just turning the corner oblivious of the lapse of eight long hours. It was all soulful pin-drop silence. The new-weds forgot their earthly pin-pricks and the crowd had lost its animation. 'Hearing that I (not the author, but P.S.V. Pillai) had been following all along, he took leave of *Sri raga* for a brief while, sent for me and whispered,

'So, you have come all the way to hear this old man's music!'

The break prompted him to take up *Kedaragoula* and then *Sindubhairavi* as *ragamalika* and wind up. What a celestial benediction his rendition was!

**Gurukulavasa on the streets!** That was the way people became immortals; it was mostly hearing; As I wrote this, I met Mannargudi Sambasiva Bhagavata, the prime spirit behind the Tyagaraja Sangita Vidwat Sabha, Madras 4. He remarked:

'My guru, Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar held no classes. Suddenly, even at the dead of night, he would sing and I would hear. He would give concerts and I would hear. He would discuss with other maestros and I would hear. Rarely he would give tuitions in the sense it is now understood. His method of teaching was "Imbibe the best by hearing".'

Elsewhere are given similar remarks of Mysore Vasudevacharya and others.

(c) Vilayat Khan in '*Filigree in Sound*' (Gopal Sharman) provides some guidelines:

- i. Never approach a concert with troubled thoughts.
- ii. Do not get into quarrels and disputes, put all personal fears and resentment out of your mind.
- iii. Be well rested with no trace of weariness about you. Still your mind, retreat into a calm and quiet place.
- iv. Be washed and clean before you approach music.
- v. Tune your instrument and take accompanists' permission to begin
- vi. Face your audience with neither too much eagerness nor disdain.
- vii. Acknowledge your gratitude to your accompanists.
- viii. Close your eyes: wait for a moment.

NOW BEGIN.

(d) Vilayat Khan's tips may be taken in the light of the *vade mecum* of Tyagaraja to musicians in *Kaddanu Variki (Todi)*:

"Cast off your sleep: get up very early in the morning and practise.  
 Culture your voice well in the still early hours of the morning.  
 Take a beautiful tambura for your sruti.  
 Let your mind be PURE; intone the swaras correctly and well and  
 Stick to SAMPRADAYA".

(e) Dr. M.L.Vasantakumari says:

'Practising many compositions of the Trinity in any one raga gives us the required musicianship to improvise alapana and kalpanaswaras in that raga. For instance, one should learn thirty or forty in *Todi* to acquire a total profile of the raga.'

**Note:** One hour concerts can be ragawise !

## NO ROUTINE CLASSES:

Mysore Vasudevachar had spoken of Patnam Subramania Ayyar not taking up classes for long for valid reasons. T.K. Govinda Rao speaks of Dikshitar not giving lessons for long but of the pupil imbibing much and singing true to theory.

G.N. Balasubramaniam 'was a moody teacher. Sometimes he would not teach or sing at all. We would wait and return. He was against routine classes.'

— (Dr. M.L. Vasantakumari).

## APPRENTICESHIP :

Doctors, lawyers, etc. have apprenticeship. Even so, after passing examinations, students of music should undergo a sort of gurukulavasa to imbibe more practical, better and surer methods.

— (Dr. M.L. Vasantakumari).

## RE-INTRODUCE:

Gurukulavasa had the merit of the teacher elevating himself to be worthy of the high avocation and the pupil attuning to absorb the best with all devotion to his guru. Here is the prayer of the teacher to Indra:

' May I be the receptacle of such learning as assures immortality: to acquire such knowledge may my body be alert and active; may my tongue always utter sweet words; may I with my ears listen abundantly to the highest truth...'

'May the Lord protect us both, the teacher and the taught; may He nourish us; may we work effectively in close unison. May our study be of the highest glory and lustre; may hatred be eliminated from us and may we be the most loving among the teachers and the taught. Om *santis = santis = santih.*'

*Taittiriyaopanishad* - Translation by Sivaramamurti C.

Should such noble prayers and sentiments be ignored?  
CANNOT THE SCHOOLS REVIVE THESE PRAYERS!

## I. TRAINING AND APPRENTICESHIP :

- a). i. A musical atmosphere at home invisibly trains and moulds the mind and inculcates receptivity, aptitude and ambition to imitate and excel. But such an environment is not a *sine qua non*.
- ii. Institutions now handle thirty to forty pupils per class. Ten to twelve should be the limit. Admission should be screened.
- iii. Graduate and post-graduate courses in music with two or three years are inadequate for students to imbibe raga swaroopas (shapes) at all.
- iv. The teacher has a major role to play. Mudicondan Venkatarama Ayyar would go step by step, pose problems for solution, administer lakshya sangeeth with lakshana ingredients. 'Follow my advice, not my practice', he would warn. 'Study how Brinda and Mukhta sustain their voice inspite of age', he would advise.

— R.Vedavalli-Sampradaya.

- b). i. Melody should not be sacrificed; excessive voice pressure and extra tempo with an eye on applause are to be avoided. *Bhava and rasa* should not run parallel to each other. Class room teaching could not bring out the finesse of gurukulavasa.
  - ii. Job opportunities should be created. Scholarships should be given to enable great masters to take in four or five apprentices to leave them as their musical heirs. I want to help such a conservatory.
- Lalgudi G. Jayaraman – 'Sampradaya.'
- c). i. Lack of timely recognition leads to frustration and demoralisation in the student. Ambition and concentration are vital to rise up to be a master. Jiichiro Date, Olympic Gold Medallist from Japan, said, 'For preparation I literally lived in the gym. Nothing else was important; nothing also mattered'. Relevant cases have been cited in *A Garland* for guidance of pupils.
  - ii. 'World No.1 in tennis, Courier is the hardest working guy, I have seen. When other people finish their matches and go home, he goes back and practises for an hour', says Pete Sampras, the talented top player.

- iii. Students and apprentices should compulsorily attend a specific number of public concerts and present notes thereon. They should carry specific marks at the final examination. If students could not now attend others' concerts, who is going to attend theirs later ?
- d). TRI-PLEX:

" The Musicians are perplexed for he was a master even for musicians;  
The Grammarians are perplexed for his nuances defy the music-scripts;  
The Rasikas are perplexed for a single kriti could be the rendition for the evening; And  
easy pleasure, not deep delight, is our obsession".

— M. Anantanarayanan, former Chief Justice, High Court, Madras.

### HARIKATHA (MUSICAL DISCOURSE):

- i. 'THERE IS NOTHING in this world the undisciplined man abhors as advice as he looks upon it as an affront treating him like a child or an idiot. So the insult-looking advice is made agreeable by clothing it in wit, proverb, poetry or music following the rule which finds reflection in Alexander Pope's dictum:

**' Men must be taught, as if you taught them not;  
And things unknown, proposed as things forgot. '**

Just as bitter pills are sugar-coated, in religious preaching bitter pieces of advice are music-coated transmitting the advice through a story. Kalak-shepam is thus double-coated with music and story.

- ii. Bhagavatars often stoop to lavish praises on those who do not deserve them too.

Clever James II once asked a preacher how he could praise princes when they did not deserve it. The ingenious preacher replied:

**' By praising them for what they are not,  
they are virtually taught as what they ought to be. '**

In contrast to this English preacher, Italian Carracciolo, confronted by His Holiness the Pope and his Cardinals, courageously exclaimed in a vein of irony (*Nindastuti*):

**'Fie on St. Peter! Fie on St. Paul! Fie on them both who having it in their power to live as *voluptuously* as the Pope and his Cardinals, foolishly chose rather to mortify their lives with fasts, watchings and labours!**

— '*Kalakshepam*' by M.S. Ramaswami Ayyar (1932)

The following couplet of Pope in his Epistle to Arbuthnot sums up the entire technique:

" Damn with faint praise, assent with leer,  
And without sneering, teach the rest to sneer. "

- iii. Musical discourses adopt both the methods as occasion demands. 'The exposition of the moral, philosophical and devotional episodes from epics, etc., in a stirring emotional manner through sweet, poetical and emotional compositions combining entertainment with enlightenment is called *Nirupana*.'
- iv. Story-telling is immemorial. But musical harikatha had its beginnings only some decades back and are called —

Kirtan in marathi, Kathakathak in hindi,  
Gagariyapurana in gujarati, Harikatha in telugu,  
Isai sorpozhivu in tamil and Katha prasangam in malayalam.

## INSPIRATION ? IMAGINATION :

" Whence and how do they come, I do not know and I have nothing to do with it... Once I have a theme, another melody comes linking itself with the first one...Then my whole soul is on fire with inspiration. It does not come to me successively with its various parts worked out in detail as they will be later on; but it is in its entirety that my imagination lets me hear it. "

— Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
(27 01 1756 - 05 12 1791)

' My imagination lets me hear it ', says Mozart. And what is ' imagination ' ? Here is what the ancient, medievalist and the modernist have thought it to be:

' The mind hath over the body that commandment which the Lord hath over a bondman; but reason hath over the imagination that commandment which a magistrate hath over a free citizen who may come also to rule in his turn. '

— Aristotle.

Wordsworth identified imagination with 'reason in her most exalted mood'.

' The lunatic, the lover and the poet \*  
Are of imagination all compact.

The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen  
Turns them to shape, and gives the airy nothing  
A local habitation and name. '

— Shakespeare in *Mid Summer Night's Dream*.

\* (Note: We take the word ' poet ' to include 'the musician and the composer' too and it fits in admirably.)

‘Imagination is a myth rich in possible interpretations.’

— M.W. Bundy in *Theory of Imagination*.

‘Music creates order out of chaos;

for rhythm imposes unanimity among the divergent;

melody imposes continuity upon the disjointed and

harmony imposes compatibility upon the incongruous.’

— Sir Yehudi Menuhin.

## MANGALAM AND MADHYAMAVATI:

‘*Madhyamavati* at the close of the concert, drama, bhajan is reputed to neutralise evil effects. It beseeches God to shower Hitam - cordiality, Priyam - love and Subham - welfare and is the most preferred of the four auspicious ragas, *Surati*, *Sourashtram* and *Vasanta* being the other three indicated in Dasavatara Ragamalika of Dikshitar.’

— Shanmukha, Bombay.

## ORCHESTRAL ANTIQUITY :

Brinda	=	Group
Gayaka Brinda	=	Choir.
Brinda Gana	=	Collective Music.
Vadya Brinda	=	Instrumentalist ensemble.
Nritya Brinda	=	Ensemble of dancers.

There is reference to *vina ganagin* in Vedas. In his *Tiruppalli Ezhuchi*, Manickavachakar mentions ‘*Veenaiyar orupal...Yazhinar orupal*’ (vainikas on one side and yazh players on the other). Sahaji Maharajah refers to Sangita Mela in *Singarampu Pallaki* (*Sankarabharana*). Kutapa (Orchestra) is referred to in *Natya Sastra* of Bharata and *Sangita Raja* of Kumbhakarna. *Sangita Ratnakara* of Sarngadeva deals with *Vrinda Lakshana*.

Kutapas provided melodic accompaniment to dramas, etc. While Western orchestra extends to seven octaves, the compass rarely exceeds four in India. Anything like an orchestra playing harmonical music in four parts could not have existed in India. Wind and stringed instruments producing consolidated volume is of recent origin. Melodic orchestration only is possible if raga system is to be preserved.

— Prof. P. Sambamurti.

**Note :** Please see remarks in the Preface to this book. Sangita Kalanidhi Maharajapuram Santhanam, in collaboration with M.S. Viswánathan, gave a concert with an orchestra of about twenty artistes. *Vide* details given elsewhere.

## BHODENDRA SWAMI KI JAI!

'I worship Srimad Bhodendra, greatest of yogis and of guides, who is the embodiment of the entire kingdom of Bhagavan Nama.'

— Sridhara Venkatesa Ayyaval.

'I worship the prominent Saint, the preceptor of the world. By merely thinking of him, Devotion to the Lord's name is inspired.'

— Sadguru Swamigal, Marudhanallur.

'Like Sri Sankara who propagated Advaita, like Sri Ramanuja for Visishtadwaita and Sri Madhwa for Dwaita, Bhodendra firmly determined the position of Namasiddhanta as a powerful concept.'

— H.H.Sri Chandrasekharendra Swamigal, 68th Pontiff, Kanchi-Kamakoti Mutt.

"I bow to the Preceptor Sri Venkatesa, an incarnation of Siva!"

— Bhodendra.

— B. Natarajan in *Sri Krishna Leela Tarangini*.

Tamil Poet Kambar gives an interesting description of Prince Bharata paying respects to Guha even as the latter paid obeisance to him. Each perceived the intrinsic spiritual fire and flame in the other and not the rank and culture. Even so, Bhodendra had spoken of Sridhara. Such noble sentiments of each other should guide people in avoiding jealousy or saying something in the presence of the other and the opposite in his absence. Oscar Wilde said, 'There are lots of people who say I have never done anything wrong... Of course, they only say them behind my back.' There was a controversy sometime back that judges should be addressed only as 'Judges'. A Senior Advocate pertinently advised agitating members of the bar not to address the Judge as 'Your Lordship' in his chamber and as 'Mr. Judge' in the Court!

## CHITTA SWARAS:

Derived from *chitta* meaning in telugu kalpita or readily arranged. Chitta swaras follow anupallavi or charanam. Such swaras have been added to some kritis of an earlier generation like -

Kavi Matrubhutayya :	Nimadi Challaga	- Anandabhairavi
Tyagaraja :	Eevasudha nivanti	- Sahana
Patnam Subramania Ayyar :	Raghuvamsa	- Kadanakutukalam
Poochi Srinivasa Ayyangar :	Sri Raghukula	- Huseni

'The confirmed view was that Tyagaraja did not compose any chittaswaras but they were added later. Purandaradasa, Margadarsi Sesha Ayyangar, Bhadrachalam Ramadasa do not appear to have composed chitta swaras.

Dikshitar and Syama Sastri have decorated their songs with chitta swaras, swara sahityas, madhyama kala sahityas, solkattu swaras, etc. '

— T.S. Parthasarathy.

### CHECK UP and DO IT:

It would be permissible to commence a song from anupallavi only where the meaning and content are cogent. To do so for better effect alone is incorrect.

— Prof. S.R. Janakiraman.

### YAMAKA: (RHETORICAL BEAUTY):

Compositions get a face-lift with ornamentation and the two languages - sanskrit and tamil - provide rich scope for this.

In Tyagaraja's *Telisi Rama (Purnachandrika)* —

'Rama' means a lady as well as the Absolute Being;

'Aja' means a goat as well as the Creator.

In Dikshitar's *Kamalambam Bhajare (Kalyani)* —

'Kamalambam' in pallavi refers to Devi Parvati,

'Kamalavani' in anupallavi refers to Lakshmi,

'Kamalapura' in anupallavi refers to Tiruvarur and

'Kamalavadanam' means lotus-faced.

— Prof. P. Sambamurti.

### PADA & JAVALI:

#### Pada

Are on Sringara - Divine or  
Dignified Love (*Madhura Bhakti*)

Padanayaka is dignified.

Texts have both an apparent  
and an inner philosophical  
content.

Compositions scholarly.

#### Javali

Are on Sringara - But of erotic,  
mundane, sensuous love.

Generally he may not be so.

Philosophical content is  
normally foreign to it.

Colloquial.

**Note :** In javalis, chitta swaras are normally avoided. Karur Sivaramayya composed macaronic javali with english and tamil - 'Oh my lovely'...(*Kharaharapriya*).

Kshetrangna's padas bring in diverse types of nayikas as shown by former Chief Justice P.V. Rajamannar:

a) 1. Sviya - the lawfully married wife.



- ii. Parakiya - an unmarried girl or a married woman.
- iii. Samanya - one free of ties like a courtesan.
- b. i. Mugdha - one who is new to sexual experience, shy.
- ii. Madhya - one who is not new to such experience but still not forward enough.
- iii. Proudha - one who is an adept in love-making.
- c. i. Swadinapatika - one to whom the husband is fully dedicated.
- ii. Vasakasajjika - One waiting fully dressed and adorned to receive her lover.
- iii. Virahotkanthita - one eagerly and nervously anxious on account of her lover not turning up at the expected time.
- iv. Vipralābha - one disappointed in not finding her lover at the appointed place.
- v. Khandita - one who scolds her lover for spending the night with another woman.
- vi. Kalahatarita - one who has quarrels with her lover, sends him away and then repents.
- vii. Prōsitabhartrika - one who is pining for her lover who has gone abroad.
- viii. Abhisarika - one who goes herself to meet her lover.
- d. i. Samyoga - one who is with her lover; and
- ii. Viyoga - one who is alone and longs for her lover.

The underlying *bhav* and *ras* in the song depend upon the category of the nayika. The musician and more particularly the dancer endeavours to portray and project the same.

## FEATHERED JAVALI?

'Bird' colloquially refers to a young woman too and the canary bird seems to be aware of it. But it is the nayaka and not the nayika who resorts to javalis !

The male canary sings such intricate songs to attract mates and deter competing males that a large region on its brain, called the higher vocal centre, is devoted to composing songs! The female canary, which neither composes nor sings (quite peculiarly), has a smaller version of the same distinctive cluster of neurons just to recognise the tunes. Dr. Eliot A. Brenowitz of the University of Washington in Seattle (US) has said that the songs produce in the female what are called copulation solicitation displays. How is the male canary to know its reaction ? If the male is the composer, singer and nattuvangam, the female is the dancer - bharata natya, kuchipudi or odissi.

'The female raises her head and tail, arches her back, holds her wings out to the sides and vibrates them. It is a good indication of a female bird's willingness to mate...It is really critical for a female bird to be able to mate selectively with males of her own species!'

(This corresponds to our peacock dance ! So there is hidden danger in it!) Woman suffragists elsewhere ought to be glad to know the freedom the female canary enjoys. Whether it selects on the basis of the relative musical appeal of individual males or whether the javali is used only to register the *inter se* claims is probably yet to be probed.

**DEAD END:**

‘ Musicians don’t retire.

They stop when there is no more music in them. ’

— Lewis Addison Arminstead.

The truth of the aphorism could be gleaned from the lives of many musicians.

**MUSICOLOGIST:**

‘ A Musicologist is a man who can read music but can’t hear it. ’

— Sir Thomas Beecham (1879 – 1961)

In the Carnatic field, scores of musicologists were not only theoreticians but were eminent performing musicians and gurus as well.

**COMPOSER:**

‘ A good composer does not imitate; he steals. ’

‘ I do not write modern music.

I only write good music. ’

— Igor Stravinsky.

Igor finds echo in Dr. Balamurali Krishna, who said, ‘ Ask not for this or that music; I have only Balamurali music’.

**PERCUSSION SOLOS:**

What Sir Thomas Beecham said of orchestra applies to some of the percussion solos —

‘ Many in the audience knew when it started and when it ended.

This public does not give a damn what goes on in between. ’

**COMPOSER INSPIRED:**

Ludwig Van Beethoven (1770 – 1827) told a violinist who complained that a passage of his was unplayable:

‘ When I composed that I was conscious of being inspired by God

Almighty. Do you think I can consider your puny little fiddle when He speaks to me ? ’

Muthuswamy Dikshitar (1776 – 1835) was an intellectual and a divine. Many feel that his compositions are difficult. They are described as ripe coconuts whose pulp can be taken only after one breaks the shell. **Beethoven had replied**

**to such complaints on behalf of his Indian contemporary !**

### **THE PATH TO GLORY – THE FIRST TITLE:**

‘ **My appeal to the Youth:** Do not feel contented with what you have achieved but try to accomplish the impossible. Try to reach out and grasp that which is eluding you. Let your endeavour be earnest and your urge pure and insatiable!’

‘ I felt convinced that my own limitations should not impede the potential of the veena. I had to rise up, elevate myself to meet its demands. ’

‘ I had to prove that I was destined to create a style of my own .... which is the continuity of the vocal experience and vocal effect... Hectic practice and playing turned from a challenge to a penance... which attitude and application almost earned my **first title** orally conferred.... not given in the form of printed-citation. The title was *Asura Sadakam*. ’

— Veena S. Balachander  
in his Presidential address at the  
South Indian Music Conference,  
Madras in December 1983.

### **SAPTASWARA or ASHTAWARA ?**

‘ Workship the beautiful Goddesses presiding over the Seven Swaras’, says Tyagaraja in Sobhillu *Saptaswara (Jaganmohini)*.

Each sthayi has, in effect, eight and does not command complete, comprehensive identity otherwise. Perhaps it may be taken as borrowing a *shadja* from the upper or the lower octave. The ceiling of each floor is the base for the upper floor and it works likewise downwards too. When there is no ceiling it is topless and when there is no floor, the structure is incomplete and none can float always under the ceiling. Rendition does not stop at *nishada* or the *rishaba* to ensure adherence to the seven-swara formula. Why should any sthayi borrow a *shadja* from the upper or the lower sthayi working upwards or lower down *ad infinitum*? Is there any sacrilege in allowing the credit of the full eight to a sthayi?

### **SELECT ISSUES:**

1. Students of music in government or private schools should be made to **attend compulsorily at least one concert per month** and present notes which should all be analysed in the classes.
2. It is opined that the syllabus for most of the courses is not sufficient to

make a complete musician. A syllabus committee should be formed to go into the question in detail and present proposals for modification. The Music Academy, Madras may take up this usefully.

3. Rural areas are badly neglected by institutions and patrons. Governmental bodies like the Directorate of Art and Culture, Madras and the South Zone Cultural Centre, Thanjavur should concentrate only in rural areas and **not waste their energies in the City.**
4. Music Colleges should, and private institutions should be encouraged to, hold concerts once a month to which the public should be invited.
5. Youth Associations should be enabled to hold some of their concerts in places other than the City availing the services of local institutions and sabhas.
6. Rural talent should be located and youth should be enabled to join the training institutions for music.
7. **Live nagaswara should be made *sine quo non* at public functions** and there should be a government ban on switching on blaring promiscuous music which is imposed by unmusical private agents for payment to create noise, disturbing noise catering to none at public functions.

\* \* \*

## MERIT :

'The musician's skill lies in his ability to bring out the raga's effect anytime of the day. When *Neelambari* is sung in the afternoon, the musician should produce the effect of nighttime. *Bilahari* or *Bhoopalam* rendered at any time of the day should create the mood of briskness... When I sang *Amrithavarshini*, it had rained...

– T.N. Seshagopalan

(Vide details on S. Rajam regarding rains after a rendition in *Amrithavarshini*.)

\* \* \*

## GOODWILL AMBASSADOR :

Yehudi Menuhin was born of Russian parents, in the United States, is naturalised as a British citizen, is an honorary citizen of Switzerland and is an admirer of Indian musical traditions. The UNESCO has named him its 'Goodwill Ambassador' for his exceptional contribution in the fields of creativity, artistic education, peace and solidarity among nations !

# F

The Biographical Dictionary of Carnatic Composers and Musicians (Book I) titled '*A Garland*' was released on June 19, 1990 by H.H. Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swamigal, Sankaracharya of Kanchipuram, the first copy being received by Sri Haridhos Giri Swamigal. Time is fleeting and many additions and a few corrections have been found necessary to it. Though normally such an effort is NOT made, it is hereby sought to update the information contained therein in the interest of the Art and the Artistes, Researchers and Students. When the book is reprinted these will be duly incorporated in it.

Excerpts of the reviews of '*A Garland*' are given below which justify the massive efforts taken.

## "A GARLAND"

(A Biographical Dictionary of Carnatic Composers and Musicians)

### BOOK I

By N. Rajagopalan, I.A.S.(Rtd.)

Pages : LXXIV + 540

\* \* \*

"The book is a gargantuan project, undertaken by a single writer and the first of its kind in English with as many as 720 biographies of composers, musicians, musicologists and odhuvars, written by the author himself with an enviable freshness of language, judgment and discerning sense of humour. One cannot but admire the prodigious effort...The first part...make an admirable prelude. The biographies in Part II show a fine sense of proportion on the part of the author... cross references will be found extremely useful by students, teachers and researchers. The work thus becomes a **definitive source book of reference** for everyone... The author has spared no pains to make the book a 'ready reckoner'... mammoth effort...."

G. T. C. Rathakrishnan in The '*Hindu*' 'Express Weekend'.

"...a creditable achievement. There is a wealth of information which should be interesting and useful... The author's love of music and respect for musicians infuses the entire book... Rajagopalan is to be complimented for bringing out a very interesting and useful publication, filling a long standing gap."

— PCJ in '*Sruti*' 75/76

"...magnificent effort... this garland will be ever-lasting with its undying brilliance... an unparalleled treasure... the world of art is deeply indebted to the author... students and lovers of music abroad will find it highly helpful... if kept in music teaching institutions, the students will derive much knowledge.. should find place in all libraries..."

— 'Neelam' in '*Dinamalar*'

"We share with Shri. T.S. Parthasarathy his 'amazement' at your one—man effort in bringing out the monumental dictionary... there is no other publication which gives so much information about so many glittering gems of the world of Carnatic music..."

— Shri S. Ramakrishnan, Exe. Director, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay.

"...Treasure house of information, anecdotes and commentaries...Now '*Sangeetham*' will benefit from the GARLAND'S fragrance."

— Dr. Uma Roy, Editor, '*Sangeetham*', CMANA, U.S.A.

'...is a laudable attempt...an easy-to-refer volume...a most useful addition to the corpus of literature on Indian classical music...The volume is a feat of love and laborious toil...The biographical details and sketches are engrossing... N.R. has done a great service to the spiritual tradition by including the odhuvars in his work... Interesting anecdotes enliven...'

— Prof. V. Rajaraman in '*Bhavan's Journal*' No.38/6

'*Precious golden volume*', '*richest treasure*', an '*object of delicious pleasure*' that breathes history, delves into the labyrinths of music, musicians, composers and hymnodists... this is the first of its kind with a dimension of an encyclopaedia... a one-man 'sadhana'...giving you on a platter a whole volume of material otherwise scattered and hidden so far, sifted or sorted, well-compiled, tabulated with a thematic perception, with a musical impulse, ...work of an intellectual deeply dedicated to music, one that is a 'monument' of high thinking and lucid expression...The course of '*A Garland*' flows like a grand classical Karnatak concert...The author's manodharma soars high in every musical minutae...originality of approach, the stupendous knowledge, memory and information visualise everything in a new perspective. A fresh approach – an unbiased examination and sound judgment – all in a stream of fluent language. What more do you need to enthral you? It is a piece of excellent literature in itself, where even the 'fillers' fill your heart...undoubtedly a ready-reckoner, for one and all, a researcher's treasure trove and a piece of musical literature worth

## ADDENDA &amp; CORRIGENDA TO 'A-GARLAND'

Page Line

x	33	For: 'are solicited'	Read: 'is solicited'
xxii	7	For: 'Sangita Kalanidhi Tiger'	Read: 'Justice'
	9	For: 'Venerable Tiger'	Read: 'the venerable Judge'
	19	For: 'Tiger'	Read: 'Judge'

xxiv 11 *Insert* the following as a separate para below the words 'The Finale' and above the words "It is here...".

Dr. M. Balamurali Krishna, who sees no danger of tradition being gobbled up by the threat and advance of the spirit of *avant garde*, said at the Music Academy, Madras on the First January, 1989:

"Tradition in music should not be a 'touch-me-not' or viewed as an art piece in a museum. There is no need to talk about the upkeep of its purity for any common musician should have known the fundamentals of tradition and purity without which one could not achieve the ability to perform or get any recognition. Traditions had never posed obstruction to new additions to any art form. As newer innovations would not fade out the purity of any art form, doyens should pursue innovations and add new dimensions to art forms. However the fundamentals of traditions and the purity of art should always be kept up."

The Doctor, 'whose career has been a never-ending round of victories in the multi-lingual Kurukshetra star war of music' has to take notice of the predicament of hundreds of artistes who are not sure of the boundaries of purity of traditional art and who have to wage a perpetual struggle for existence and subsistence too. Literally they are on the horns of a dilemma! The Doctor's views may sound like the apex court judicial pronouncements on 'Fundamental Rights v. Directive Principles of State Policy' intelligible in full measure only to a musical Nariman or Palkhiwallah !

xxvi	20	For: 'Kodapati Yazh'	Read: 'Kodapati (Goshtavati) Yazh
	30	<i>Insert</i> below (i) as a fresh item:	

(j) Homer is credited with curing Ulysses; David cured a Greek king of mental illness and Fairnelli cured George III with the aid of music.

xxviii	17	For: 'Needhi'	Read: Neeti'
	24.	<i>Insert</i> as item (v) below line 23:	

v. Tiruvarur's musical associations go back to the times of Saint Sundaramurti Nayanar (ninth century). When the Trinity were all born at this chosen place, Tiruvarur was already the cultural headquarters of central Tamil Nadu and the rulers of Tanjore were devotees of Lord Tyagaraja of Tiruvarur.

xxix 26 Add at the end as item (xvii)

xvii. Their first songs were all in sanskrit:

Sastri - *Janan Natajano (Saveri)*

Tyagaraja - *Namo Namu Raghavaya (Desiya Todi)*

Dikshitar - *Sri Nathadi Guruguho Jaya (Mayamalavagaula)*

xxxi 5 After line 4, insert as new items below item 'n'

- o. Dikshitar was the least personal in his compositions - the first person singular being generally devoted to all devotees. Sastri is a little more personal. The 'I' in Tyagaraja means just himself. (Dr. D.N. Visweswariah, U.S.A.)
- p. The influence of Hindustani music on Dikshitar was pronounced and that of Western music marginal. The other two were free from such influences.
- q. 'Dikshitar is the only composer who has written in all the seven basic talas of Carnatic music. Sastri delights in rhythmical beauties and was tala prastara. Tyagaraja is the foremost tone-poet with infinite imaginative variety and melody.'
- r. Dikshitar was a strict adherent to and the torch-bearer of the Venkatamakhi School and followed the raga nomenclature (*Kanakambari, etc.*) given in '*Raga Lakshanas*' stated to be the work of Muddu Venkatamakhi or Venkata Vaidyanatha Dikshitar. Tyagaraja was a follower of the School of Govindacharya, author of '*Sangraha Chudamani*' using the nomenclature '*Kanakangi, etc.*'. Sastri too followed the same school.
- s. Tyagaraja gave atleast two performances *as recorded*. The first was in the house of Sonti Venkataramanayya, when he sang *Janakiramana (Suddhaseemantini)* and *Dorukuna (Bilahari)* with elaborate niraval at the phrase '*Kamita phaladayakiyou*'. The second was at Tanjore before Sonti Venkatasubbiah and other musicians. There is no record of Dikshitar concerts while Sastri had given during the two contests.



- xxxix 15 *Add*: Swami Sivananda, Somasundara Bharati and Umeru Pulavar were also connected with Ettayapuram.
- xLix 2 *For*: 'Tiger' *Read*: 'Judge'
- Lix 28 *For*: Panchadeesa *Read*: Panchanadeesa
- Lxxiii 2 *For*: Azhaganambi *Read*: Dakshinamoorti
- 4 8 *For*: (circ 1813-1846) *Read*: (c.1770-1854)
- 5 1-2 *For*: Akhalananda *Read*: Achalananda
- 23 *Insert* below line 22: Vadya Ratna by Narada Gana Sabha.
- Last line *For*: "Singa Kutti" *Read*: 'Singa Kutti '
- 6 9 *For*: (b.Feby. 10, 1921) *Read*: (Febby .10, 1921—Jany. 26, 1991)
- 7 6 *Add*: Their compositions are easy-flowing and rich in musical structure, *yadugai and monai*.
- 8 1 *For*: (c.1830-1870) *Read*: (c.1800-1870)
- 11 11 *For*: Talapaka *Read*: Tallapaka
- 13 8 *Add*: Son of Chennavu Reddi and Ovu Ammal, he studied tamil under Ramaswami Pulavar of Seithur Zamin and Dr. U.Ve. Swaminatha Ayyar then at Tiruvaduthurai.
- 14 19 *For*: Krishna *Read*: 'Krishna
- 17 8 *Add*: Kavirayar's *Rama Natakam* contains 197 darus, 60 (two-line) dwipadas and one thodayam with 268 verses. He has followed *Kamba Ramayanam* and used forty-one ragas. *Asaveri* (15), *Kalyani* (13), *Saveri* (20), *Todi* (14), *Mohanam* (18), *Madyamavati* (16), *Sankarabharanam* (13) and *Bhairavi* (10) contribute mainly.
- 13 *For*: Swami Malai *Read*: Swamimalai
- 15 *For*: the delign of *Read*: the delight of
- 3rd from bottom: *For*: Paarkalaam: *Read*: Palakaalum
- 2nd from bottom: *For*: tales, *Read*: talas
- 19 4th from bottom: *For*: less concerts; *Read*: less for concerts
- 21 10 *Insert* below line 9: Kalaimamani from Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram in 1991.
- 21 13 *Add*: Balakrishna Ayyar was son of Violin Samayya and had his training under the celebrated Tanjore Krishna Bhagavata. The Music Academy, Madras, has honoured him in 1957 with a

- 22 10- *Insert below line 9:*  
 11- Certificate of Merit – Madras Music Academy – 1980  
 12 Sangeetha Kala Nipuna – Mylapore Fine Arts Club – 1992  
 Award – Sangit Natak Akademy, Delhi – 1992
- 23 6th from bottom: *For:* Parallal; *Read:* Parallel
- 24 20 *For:* Chandrahasita, *Read:* Chandrahasila  
 36 *For:* Aara Kimba Ve *Read:* Aragimpave
- 26 34 *Add:* T.S.Parthasarathy observes that the '*Takka*' raga incident relates to Govinda Dikshitar, grandson of Venkatamakhin and not Sonti Venkatasubbiah.  
 41 *Add:* and Tiruvengadam Pillai of Kanchipuram.  
*For:* 'murdas' *Read:* 'mudras'
- 27 2 *Add:* besides Chitrakavi Sivarama Bhagavatar of Tanjore .  
 10 *Add:* Music Academy, Madras has awarded her a Certificate of Merit in 1975 besides a State Academy Award she got earlier.  
 8th from bottom: *For:* Yahudi *Read:* Yehudi
- 28 5 *For:* mastro *Read:* maestro  
 22 - *Insert below line 21:*  
 23 1991 Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar Award.  
 He is Secretary, Tyagaraja Mahotsava Sabha.
- 29 28 *For:* Wherever it is done.  
*Read:* Wherever it is done by singing —  
 Bhodendra Jagatamgurumasraye – Devagandhari  
 Bhajare Manasa Bhodendra – Behag  
 Sri Guru Bhodendram Manasa – Suruti  
 Satamani Pranutimaruchu – Todi  
 Bhodendra Gurum Bhajeham – Kanada
- 30 11- *Insert below line 10 as lines 11-13:*  
 13 Sangeeta Chakravarti by Calcutta Fine Arts - 1990  
 Sangeetha Choodamani by Sri Krishna Gana Sabha - 1991  
 Kalaimamani by T.N.E.I. Nataka Mandram - 1992
- 33 13th from bottom: *For:* Viswanatnan *Read:* Viswanathan
- 34 11 He published the *Rare Kritis of Poochi Srinivasa Ayyangar and has composed eight varnas and kritis himself besides inventing the raga 'Dwitheeya Kuntala'.*
- 36 6 *For:* name *Read:* names  
 12 *For:* adopt *Read:* adapt
- 38 31 *For:* Subhara *Read:* Subhadra

- 39 41- *Insert* below line 40:  
 43 Sangeetha Choodamani-Sri Krishna Gana Sabha - 1990  
 Award from Sangeet Natak Akademy - 1990  
 Award L.V.R. - 1991
- 42 *Add* at the end: As a teen ager, he had acted in films.
- 42 26 *For:* known Chowdiah *Read:* known. Chowdiah
- 49 9th from bottom: *For:* to take up to *Read:* to take to
- 51 30 *For:* he heard *Read:* he heard of
- 52 *Add* at the end: Kalaimamani by Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka  
 Mandram 1990
- 54 9 *Enter:* as fresh para below line 8:

Born at Gaddavalli near Hassan, Doreswamy Ayyangar, a child prodigy, took to flute and joined the Palace Vidwans' Orchestra at first. Only later he switched over to veena to rise up to be the doyen of artistes in Karnataka. (The Palace then maintained the Western Band, the Indian Band and the Vidwans' Orchestra.) He is technically superb and classical. His tanams are fascinating.

- 54 25 *For:* comprisig *Read:* comprising
- 57 11 *Insert* below line 10:  
 Title: Isai Kalai Chelvar by Ramalingar Pani Mandram - 1992
- 58 8 *For:* tantalising *Read:* tantalizing
- 59 12 *For:* (b.1913) *Read:* (1913 - March 26, 1985)
- 60 6 from bottom: *For:* on the face to *Read:* on the face of
- 70 1 *For:* later *Read:* earlier
- 72 42- *For:* Sri Rama Sita Alankara Swaroopa  
 43 *Read:* Sri Ramya Chitta Alankara Swaroopa
- 74 12 *Insert* below line 11 as line 12:  
 Title: Kalaimamani by Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram in  
 1992
- 5th from bottom: *For:* varyig *Read:* varying
- 75 29 *Delete* the word: "etc."  
 30- *Insert* below line 29:  
 32 Sangeet Natak Akademy Award - 1990  
 K.P. Rao Memorial Palghat Mani Ayyar Award - 1991  
 Mridanga Kala Sikhamani - 1991

76      3      *Add:* Naik is credited with the rare feat of igniting lamps by singing in raga *Dipak* before royalty. Whether it is accepted or not, it lends added grace to his eminence and image. Venkatamakhin hails him as an authority on Sruti.

77      3      *For:* carried      *Read:* carried out  
25      *For:* Krishna Bhagavatar      *Read:* Krishnaswami Bhagavatar.

87      29      *For:* clutured      *Read:* cultured

90      Last line:      *For:* Abdul Khader      *Read:* Ghulam Khader

92      12      *For:* Eneffable      *Read:* Ineffable

95      4      *Insert* below line 3: Under Jayadeva:

'By injecting the tenderness and melliflence of the popular musical lyric into the strong frame of Sanskrit poetry, Jayadeva made the last attempt at the resurrection of neo-classical literature in Sanskrit.'

— Dr. Sukumar Sen.

4      *Enter* against the name:      (b. Sept. 4, 1932)

18 -      *Insert* below line 17:

	Sangita Kala Sikhamani	Indian Fine Arts Society, Madras	1990
	Sangita Sagaram	Cultural Centre for Performing Arts, Madras.	1990
26	Sangeetha Kala Jyothi	Suswara	
	Palkalai Selvi	International Music Trust, Madras	1992

The artiste is the Founder-Director of the Cultural Centre and it is but proper that the honour is conferred on her too! Daughter of R. Subramania Mudaliar and Neelambal, she has availed of the government scheme TRYSEM to give training in music with stipendiary benefits.

95      29      *For:* (August 15, 1937)  
*Read:* (August 15, 1937 - January 17, 1991)

97      1      *For:* (b. 1928)      *Read:* (July 22, 1928 - Jan 25, 1991)

98      4      Below line 3 *insert*.  
Sangita Kalanidhi      Music Academy, Madras      —      1991

8-  
10      *Substitute* the following:

D.K. Jayaraman was a lovable person and soft spoken. I wrote early in 1990, 'He may come up for special honours as he completes his fifty years of non-stop programmes at the Academy — perhaps a record for a brother-sister too'. Quite fittingly, he was honoured by the Academy but most tragically he died in harness

as a Kalanidhi twenty-four days later — an unfortunate record. His guru-sister and a Sangita Kalanidhi, D.K. Pattammal writes:

' I would describe him as camphor; just as it blazes in a second, Jayaraman could assimilate anything instantaneously. He was my first and foremost disciple and my accompanist till 1977. We had to make some sruti adjustments to perform together. I am afraid his habit of stretching his neck and looking upwards while singing was developed to accommodate my pitch of five-five and a half kattais '.

- |     |       |  |   |
|-----|-------|--|---|
| 101 | 7     | <i>For.</i> (c. 1446-1465)   | <i>Read:</i> (c. 1400-1465)   |
| 101 | 27    | <i>Add:</i> Music Academy, Madras awarded him a Certificate of Merit in 1973.  |   |
|     | 28    | Sangit Natak Akademy Award came in 1992.   |   |
| 102 | 1     | <i>For.</i> Nephew,  | <i>Read:</i> grand nephew   |
| 103 | 19    | <i>Add:</i> Was given the title of Kalaimamani by the Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram.   |   |
| 104 | 1     | <i>For.</i> (16th century)   | <i>Read:</i> (1508-1606)  |
| 105 | 8     | <i>Add</i> at the end: Received the Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar Award in 1991.  |   |
|     | 17    | <i>For.</i> 'Madras'.  | <i>Read:</i> Madras, which awarded a Certificate of Merit to him in 1985. |
| 106 | 24-25 | <i>For.</i> Thirumarugal Natesan's memorable play on nagaswaram<br><i>Read:</i> Nagaswaram Dasari's memorable play   |   |
| 107 | 13    | <i>For.</i> Kakinada.<br><i>Read:</i> Kakinada, besides Kalaimamani from Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram in 1992.  |   |
|     | 14    | <i>Add:</i> She created a record for non-stop violin recitals by performing for 29 hours at Madras on December 19-20, 1988. <i>Tristhayee Sangamam</i> is another innovative ensemble of hers. |   |
| 110 | 13    | <i>For.</i> retinue  | <i>Read:</i> retinue  |
| 111 | 5     | <i>For.</i> he attained  | <i>Read:</i> he would have attained                                       |
|     | 21    | <i>For.</i> <i>Ganalola</i>  | <i>Read:</i> <i>Janaki Ramana</i>   |
| 112 | 6-10  | Shift lines 19-23 as lines 6 – 10 below the words ' Concerts tour : Sri Lanka'   |   |
|     | 18    | Delete the heading entry in <i>toto</i>  |   |
| 113 | 5     | <i>For.</i> <i>Gananamudham</i>  | <i>Read:</i> <i>Ganamudham</i>  |
|     | 35    | <i>Insert</i> below line 34:<br>Certificate of Merit by Music Academy, Madras 1974.  |   |

123 21 *Add:* Sulamangalam Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar has given glowing tributes to the musicianship of the Brothers. They used to so expatiate on the meaning and implications of each of the songs of their guru after rendition and on his eminence that the audience would melt into tears, he says.

125 20 *For:* *Prahlada Bakti Vijaya* of Tyagaraja , *Read:* *Prahlada Charita Kirtanas* of Melattur Venkatarama Sastri

126 End *Add:* Honours & Titles:  
Sangita Natak Academy Award 1986  
Sangita Kalanidhi title from Music Academy, Madras 1992  
Disc recordings.

129 10 *Add :* *Vide Another Garland*

130 26 *Add:* Presently he is Member, Board of Studies in Music and Dance, Bharatidasan University and Member, Tamil Nadu Eyal, Isai, Nataka Mandram.

132 *Insert* as a fresh para below line 20:

Bidaram Krishnappa was giving a concert at the residence of Vina Seshanna before the elite of the City. As he was concluding raga *Todi*, a prominent citizen sitting in front made a strange request to sing in *Todi* raga exhibiting his blissful ignorance. 'Yes Sir, with pleasure when persons like you condescend to listen ', said Krishnappa with humility as he knew the celebrity and sang altogether in a different raga. The honourable gentleman highly pleased with the obliging rendition averred,

' I have never before heard *Todi* so captivating. I do not think I will ever have the good fortune of listening to such masterly rendering of the raga thus again. ' — (K. Vasudevacharya).

The gentleman was true in fact !

22 Krishnappa's birth year is also given as 1869.

136 17 *For:* Achyutha Raghava *Read:* Achyutha Vijayaraghava  
21 *For:* avalantial *Read:* torrential

138 14 *Add:* Kulasekhara Perumal is identified with Swati Tirunal by T.S. Parthasarathy.

140 12 *Correct:* sambadu as Sambadu  
33 T. Chinna Singaracharyulu wrote in 1905. 'Tiruvattur Krishnasamayya, first son of Veena Kuppayyar, had a melodious voice and would play on violin and flute. If he had lived till now, he would have eclipsed his father; but died young. The second son,

Ramaswamayya too was a good vocalist. ' Surely a great family of towering artistes of multi-disciplinary capabilities !

- 145 28 *For.* have witnessed *Read:* has witnessed
- 154 37 *Insert* below line 36: U.K., Germany — 1992..
- 155 10 *Insert* below line 9 as line 10, etc.  
 Certificate of Merit — Music Academy, Madras 1990  
 T.T.K. Endowment Award 1990  
 Kalaimamani – TN Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram 1992  
*Add:* She is Visiting Professor, Sri Padmavati Mahila University, Tirupati.
- 33 *For.* (18th Century) *Read:* (1712 – 1787)
- 156 9 *Add:* Several of his compositions are not traceable. His works include '*Nondi Natakam*' on Lord Ayyanar of his village Tillaividangan.
- 31 *Add:* Son of Rangaraya, Mathrubhuthayya called himself Sringara Rasajnah, Rasika Kavi and Sarasa Sahitya Madhura Vagjari.
- He commanded a flowing, elegant style and was honoured with the title of '*Mukku Timmanarya Muddu Palaku*'.
- 158 32 *Insert* below line 31 as line 32:  
 'Musician of the Year' Award - Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar Trust 1991.  
 Madurakala Praveena by Sri Sathguru Sangeetha Samajam Madurai - 1992.
- 163 16 *For:* *Bajarere Siddha* *Read:* *Bhajarere Chitta*
- 173 8 *For:* *Niti Chala Sukhama* *Read:* *Nidhi Chala Sukhama*
- 182 16 *For:* *Vipanchi'* *Read:* '*Vipanchi*'
- 184 18- *Insert* below line 17:  
 19 Sangeetacharya by Sadguru Gnananandha Sangeet Sammelan in 1992  
 Gnana Peeth Award & Sangeeta Kalajyoti by Suswaram in 1992  
 Last *Enter:* Concert tour: Germany, U.K. 1992.
- 187 35 *For.* nonchallantly *Read:* nonchalantly
- 189 43- *Insert* below line 42 as lines 43 – 44:  
 44 1991 Saptagiri Sangeeta Vidwan Mani by T.T.D. Devasthanams.  
 1992 Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar Trust Award.

- 191 7 For: 'research. Read: Son of Gangadhara and Parvati and  
disciple of Sivarama Tirtha, Narayana Tirtha married Rukmini.  
The eminent Siddhendra Yogi was his disciple.
- 192 25 Insert below line 24 as line 25 : Thevara Tamizhisai Tendral -  
By Tirugnana Sambandhar Isai Vizha 1991  
*For:* (1900 - 1953), *Read:* (1888 - Octr. 10, 1940)
- 31 *Add:* He had his training in music under Kivalur Ramachandra  
Ayyar.
- 204 28 *Add:* He is a Fellow of the Sangeet Natak Academy, Delhi.
- 207 14 *Insert* as line 14 as a separate para:  
Title: Vaggeya Ratna by NGS -AIMA.
- 207 28 *Add:* Her musical tutors include V.C. Vaidyanathan, a disciple of  
Ariyakudi Ramanuja Ayyangar, N.S. Krishnawami  
Ayyangar, a disciple of Naina Pillai, Kanchipuram  
Kamakshi Ammal and P. Sambamurti. Learnt Tirupugazh  
from Velur Appadurai Achariar and padams from  
Rajalakshmi Ammal, daughter of Dhanammal.
- 37 *Insert* above the titles already given:  
Gana Saraswati 1944  
Presidential Award 1962
- 41- *Delete* the word ' and '
- 42 *Delete* the words ' besides others '
- 43- Insert at the end :
- 47 Hafiz Ali Khan Award 1989  
Government of India Fellowship 1990-1991  
Distinguished Service Order by Rotary Club, Madras 1991  
Gayaka Ratnam by S.S.T. Sangita Sabha 1992  
Fellowship by Sangit Natak Akademy 1992
- 210 29- *Insert* below line 28:  
30 Title : Kalaimamani by Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka  
Mandram 1990.  
Muthamizh Peravai Award 1992.
- 211 End Pundarika Vittala: *Vide Book II.*
- 212 30 *For:* Poona,  
*Read:* Poona (according to Dr. V.V. Srivatsava, Purandaralaya  
near Araga and Tirthahalli in Karnataka),
- 213 15 *For:* Purandara Dasa, *Read:* Purandara Vittala



- 214 *Vide Another Garland* on Pushpavanam.
- 215 26 *For.* avalantial *Read:* torrential
- 218 23- Amend and add:  
 24- Sri Parijathaharana Prabandham  
 25 Sri Valmika Charitram  
 Sri Rukmini Krishna Vivaha Yakshagana in telugu.  
 Sringara Savitri  
 Achyutendrabhyutham and Gajendra Moksham
- 31 *Add:* Dr. S. Seetha mentions that lavish patronage of arts marked his reign which was graced by:  
 Chemakura Venkataraju, author of '*Vijaya Vilasa*'  
 Krishnaadvvari, author of '*Naishada Parijatam*'  
 Raja Chudamani Dikshitar, author of '*Ananda Raghava Nataka*'  
 Yagnanarayana Dikshitar and Madhuravani, who were honoured with kanakabhishekam.  
 Raghunatha had been extolled with such honorifics as  
 Sarasa Sahitya Kala Bhoja,  
 Prabhanda Parameswara,  
 Bharata Vidya Durendra and Abhinava Bhoja.
- 219 16 *For.* (b. Aug. 23, 1913) *Read:* (Aug. 23, 1913 - May 6, 1990)
- 221 18 *Add:* He received the Sangeet Natak Akademy Award and the Certificate of Merit from the Music Academy, Madras in 1991.
- 223 31 *For.* would *Read:* would
- 224 17 *Add:* A good organiser, he is a vocalist too.
- 225 22 *Insert* as a fresh para below line 21:  
 Concert tours: Malaysia and Japan
- 23 *For:* Sambasiva *Read:* Subbarama
- 226 15 Below the line 14, enter as line 15:  
 Award by Sangeet Natak Akademy, 1991.
- 228 22 *For:* (b. Novr. 18, 1906), *Read:* (Novr. 18, 1906 -  
 Octr. 21, 1992)
- 229 22 *For.* Sethulara *Read:* Chetulara
- 231 26 *For.* (b. circ. 1915) *Read:* (b. June 1, 1915)
- 27 *Insert* below line 26, as line 27, etc:  
 Ramachandran had his training under his father initially and later under Pithambari Desai, Asthana Vidwan of Venkatagiri and Kumbakonam Rangu Ayyangar. Having made his debut at the age of seven, he blossomed into an artiste of great merit and was

known for his *arachapu* - delectable strokes. Had accompanied most of the performing stalwarts in the third and fourth decades of this century.

- 232 17 Correct: 1986, as: 1986 and 1992.  
 26 Enter below line 25:  
 Tyagaraja Aradhana Festival, Sangita Ratnakara 1992  
 Cleveland
- Last line: *Amend* '1986.' as – 1986, Palani Subramania Pillai  
 Award by Ninth Talavadya Mahotsav, Bangalore 1990  
 and the title 'Laya Kala Nipuna'.
- 233 37 *For.* appraised *Read:* apprised
- 234 15-23 *Delete:* the existing script and *insert:*  
 The tradition that Kabirdas was initiated by Ramadasa is discounted by Gowri Kuppuswami and M. Hariharan since Kabir lived between 1440 and 1518. Dasa's preceptor was Reghunatha Bhattarcharya.
- 235 23 *For.* (b. 1932) *Read:* (1932 - Jany. 7, 1990)  
 35 *For:* (b. Octr. 10, 1910 ), *Read:* ( Octr. 10, 1910 -  
 Novr. 09, 1992 )
- 236 17- *Insert* below line 16 as lines 17 - 18:  
 18 Certificate of Merit by Music Academy, Madras - 1989  
 Kalaimamani by Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram - 1990
- 237 4 *For.* professor, *Read:* Professor and later Principal
- 240 19 *For.* USA. *Read:* USA, UK, Europe, Singapore, Malaysia.  
 10- *Substitute :*  
 12 Honours & Titles :
- |                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Kalaimamani                   | By Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram |
| Saptagiri Sangita Vidvan Mani | By Tirumalai Tirupati Davasthanams     |
| Government Artiste            | By Tamil Nadu Government 1981          |
| Award                         | By Sangit Natak Akademy, Delhi 1985    |
| Doctorate                     | By the University of Arizona, USA.     |
| Kala Praveena                 | By Satguru Sangeetha Samajam, Madurai. |
| Sangeetha Choodamani          | By Federation of City Sabhas           |
| Venu Gana Ratna               | By Vani Vilasa Sabha, Kumbakonam       |
| Vadya Kala Sangita Ratna      | By Bharati Society, New York           |
| Venu Vadya Bhooshana          | By East-West Exchange, New York.       |
- 21 Against Ramaniah Chettiar:  
*For.* (b. 1887 - ) *Read:* (1887 - 1961)
- 249 34 Enter below line 33: Disc recordings (HMV)
- 250 16 *For.* 17th *Read:* 19th

- 251 End *Add:* Title: Sangeethacharya by Satguru Gnananandha Sangeet  
Sammelan 1991.
- 252 21 *Insert* below line 20: She was Lecturer, Music College of the  
Music Academy, Madras and has been honoured with the title  
of Kalaimamani by the TNEIN Mandram in 1974.
- 253 15- *Substitute* the following for the existing entries:  
26 Arul Isai Selvan – By Tamil Nadu Nalvazhi Nilayam 1973  
Nada Sudharnava By Murali Ravali 1980  
Sangeeth Samrat By Wisdom International 1985  
Kalaimamani By Tamil Nadu Eyal, Isai  
Nataka Mandram 1985  
Madhura Naada  
Mannar By Arul Neri Mandram 1986  
Sanskriti Award By Sanskriti Pratishthan of  
India 1991  
Ravi Kiran is a 'top-rank' artiste of All India Radio  
and Doordarshan.
- 28 *For:* meriteorious *Read:* meritorious.  
36 *For:* USA *Read:*  
Festival of India in France, Switzerland and Germany.  
Autumn Festival, Paris, International Music Festival of  
Radio France.  
Raag-Mala Festival, Seattle, USA.  
Rang-Raag Festival, London, besides concerts in  
USA, Canada, Holland, Germany, France,  
UK, Switzerland, etc.  
*Vide Another Garland* for fuller details.
- 257 24 *For:* to become of *Read:* to become
- 259 17 *Add:* Except that he hailed from Muvvanallur in Mannargudi  
taluk, very little is known of his life. He displayed  
'commendable knowledge of the emotional content of  
ragas and his padas are in mellifluous telugu'.  
'Rajagopala' is his signature and his padas include:
- |                   |   |                  |
|-------------------|---|------------------|
| Emataladina       | - | Yedukulakambhoji |
| Dariyecu Chumadi  | - | Sankarabharanam  |
| Iddarilo          | - | Kamboji          |
| Padakintipovalena | - | Mohanam          |
- 260 35 *For:* Niti Chala *Read:* Nidhi Chala

- 262 7 *For.* Sesha Sastrigal. *Read:*  
Sesha Sastrigal and Abhirami. Born dumb, Venkatarama gained his power of speech with the blessings of Sridhara Ayyaval. Nama Sankeerthanam was his crusading objective. Marudhanallur became a bee-hive of bhakti and bhajan.
- 264 1 *For.* (b. 1901 -) *Read:* (Feby. 14, 1901 - Octr. 23, 1973)  
26 *Insert* below line 25: Title: Gita Vadya Vinodha
- 265 29 *Insert* below line 26 as a fresh para:  
In the case of Tiger Varadachariar, it was his cap which was a constant irritation to one and all as it gave a grotesque appearance to his already poor personality. Here Sambhayya chose to grow moustache which was a deliberate affront being, a replica in shape and appearance of the Maharaja's to the annoyance of the ruler and his courtiers. As a strategem, he was persuaded to perform a yaga which enjoined on him to remove the moustache (and its disturbing presence).
- 268 *Add* at the end of the page: Gandarva Gana Mani by  
H.H. Sankaracharya of Kanchi (1991)
- 269 5 *Insert* below line 4 :  
Sangeet Natak Akademy Award - 1990.
- 25 *Add:* Born at Poovalur in Tiruchirapalli district, Sankaran has found wide appreciation of his style as evidenced by the conferment of the titles -  
Talakalai Arasu in 1980  
Laya Sikhamani in 1981  
Tala Vadya Prakasa in 1983 by the Carnatic Music Associations of North America.  
Palghat Mani Award in 1990 by the 9th Talavadya Utsav, Bangalore.  
He has taken part in the North-South (musical and not the N-S Economic parleys) jugalbandhis. Has brought out the book 'Art of Drumming - South Indian Mridangam' for the guidance of Westerners.
- 271 12 *For.* '1988' *insert* 1988 and U.S.A. 1991.  
14 *Add:* The title of 'Yuva Kala Bharati' was conferred on him by Bharat Kalachar in 1991.  
15 *For.* (b. 1928), *Read:* (May 20, 1928 – June 24, 1992)



- 285 Last line : *Add:* His full scale concert with compositions of Uthukadu Venkatasubba Ayyar alone in December 1990 displayed impeccable style and clarity.
- 286 2 *Add:* His good personality commended itself for taking the lead role of Maha Vishnu in R.S. Manohar's tele serial 'Narakasuran' in 1991.
- 287 5 *Add:* 'Another Garland' for fuller details.
- 288 20 *Insert* below line 19 :  
Rajarathinam Award by Muthamizh Peravai - 1992.
- 289 10 *Insert* as a fresh para below line 9:  
Sethuramiah had given a large number of solo concerts. Was on the Experts Committee of the Music Academy, Madras. Had worked as Secretary, Tyagaraja Sangeeta Vidwat Samajam, Madras.

#### Concert Tours : Sri Lanka.

#### Honours & Titles :

Tantree Nada Visarada by H.H. Sankaracharya of Kanchi.  
Gana Ratna from the Bhuvaneshwari Peetam  
Sapta Tantree from the Santhome Arts Academy, Madras.  
Kalaimamani from the Government of Tamil Nadu.

#### Add:

'I had the rare opportunity of performing a concert with Sri Chowdiah and Venkatarama Sastri in a documentary taken by Director K. Subramaniam depicting musical features. But the picture like Chowdiah's several compositions is yet to see the light of the day.'  
- V. Sethuramiah.

- 297 29 *For.* started my *Read:* started his
- 301 43- *For :* and Padma Sri in 1988,  
44 *Read :* Padma Sri in 1988 and  
Sangit Natak Akademy, Delhi Award in 1992.
- 306 8th from bottom: *For :* guishing *Read:* gushing
- 307 27 *Insert* below line 26 as line 27:  
Palani Subbudu Award by Percussive Arts Centre,  
Bangalore in 1992.
- 309 5 *Insert* below line 4:  
Barcelona (World of Music - Arts & Dance ) 1992  
Canada, U.K., Japan 1992.
- 13 *Add* below line 12 as line 13 etc.

Kartik Fine Arts	– Isai Peroli	1990
Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram	– Kalaimamani	1991
T. Chowdiah, National Level Award by Academy of Music, Bangalore.		1991

- 314 43- *Insert* below line 42 as lines 43 and 44:  
 44 1989 Gayaka Ratnam – Sri Swati Tirunal Sangita Sabha  
 1992 T. Chowdiah National Level Award – Academy of Music,  
 Bangalore .

The Bhishma of Carnatic music announced his retirement from concerts in January 1992 after a glorious, unparalleled performing career of sixty-six years (1926-1992)

- 318 17 Below line 16 *insert* as line 17:  
 D.Lit. (*Hon. Causa*) by Krishna Deva Raya University, Anantapur.
- 319 1 Correct the dates as: (Aug. 27, 1883 - July 25, 1943)  
 11 *Insert* as a fresh para:  
 Father of Embar Vijayaraghavachariar, Srirangachariar was posthumously honoured by the Music Academy, Madras in 1979.
- 321 8 *For:* too *Read:* and 1881 – 1958 too.)
- 321 5 *Add:* *Vide* Book '*Another Garland*' too.
- 325 12 *For:* (d. September 1958) *Read:* (1891 – September 1958)  
 18 *Add:* Born in a family of jagirdars, he learnt music under Arantangi Vaidyanatha Ayyar of Tyagaraja disciple line. Practised both on vina and violin. Had done valuable research in the compositions of Purandara Dasa, Kshetragna and Tyagaraja and published many articles. He presided over the Music Section of the All-India Oriental Conference at Tirupati in 1940 and was Founder-Editor of the *Journal of the Music Academy* for twenty- eight years.
- 328 16 *For:* (c. 1770 - 1846) *Read:* (c. 1770-1854)
- 330 26 *Insert* in column 2, the words 'Madras University 1937.'  
*Insert* below line 36 (Titles) :  
 Indira Gandhi Award for National Integration 1989  
 Gayaka Ratnam - By Swati Tirunal Sangeetha Sabha 1990  
 Konarak Samman Award - By Orissa State Cultural Council 1991  
 Telugu Academy Award (Madras) 1991  
 Paul Harris Fellowship Award 1992  
 Sapta Swara Sudha Tarangini - By Sri Andavan Swamigal 1992.
- 331 37 *For:* (20th Century) *Read:* (Octr. 8, 1885 - Feby. 6, 1960)  
*For:* Violinist *Read:* Violinist - Musicologist

333 Last line: *Add:*  
He played the lead role in the musical extravaganza film  
'Thukkaram' in tamil.

344 22 *For:* the words '(20th century)' *Read:* (1896 - March 23, 1981)

344 Last para: *Substitute* the following:

Son of Perur Sundaram Ayyar, Dikshitar was both a soloist and an accompanist. He could produce the subtlest gamakas and graces on the stoic uncompromising harmonium with his magic dexterity. Though blind in the last few decades of his life, his mastery and manodharma remained unimpaired. All stalwart violinists and percussionists had accompanied him and that reveals his stature! He was honoured with the titles of Hemambikadas, Sarva Bhouma (at Tiruvaiyaru), Harmonium Chakravarti and Kalaimamani (by Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram in 1966). Has given disc records. His was the period when harmonium ruled and reigned.

348 *Insert* below the last line:

Son of Arunachala Sastri and Gomati Ammal, Sundaram received the Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar Award in 1991 and the title 'Sangeetha Mani' from Sadguru Sangeetha Sammelan in 1992. Made his debut in 1951 at Calcutta accompanying N.C. Vasantakokilam for Andhra Cyclone Relief.

348 26 *For:* (b. 1929) *Read:* (b. Oct.13, 1948)

350 16 *Insert:* (1884-1927)

20 *Vide 'Another Garland'* for details.

At the end of the page add:

'Ayyar was a disciple of Semmangudi Narayanaswami Ayyar. Veena Balachander pays his tribute to this kindly vidwan thus:

"There was a unique violinist whose title was 'Suswaram'  
His playing was perfect, his phrases pretty and precise.  
He had a placid style so nice to derive inspiration from  
Whose speciality was rendering ragas, pure and concise."

355 7 Insert the word 'Dr.' before Swarna Venkatesa Dikshitar.  
10 Insert below line 9:

Was born at	Chidambaram,
of	Vaidyalinga Dikshitar and Ganga Bhagirathi Ammal;
Learnt Vedic literature	Mahamahopadyaya Dandapaniswami Dikshitar,
under :	Chellappa Dikshitar & Somasekhara Dikshitar;



17 *Insert* below line 16:

Titles & Honours:

Sahitya Bhushanam by Ayodhya Samskrita Samiti	(1952)
Kalaimamani by Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram	(1973)
Fellowship by Sangeeta Nataka Akademy	(1986)
Doctorate by Trichy Sanskrit University	(1987)

363 10 *Add:*

Sastri adopted the difficult *Sarabhanandana* tala (79 *aksharakalas*) to counter *Simhanandana* tala (128 *aksharakalas*) handled by Kesavayya. Prof. P. Sambamurti alludes to a charming parallel:

'There is an appropriateness in Sastri scoring a victory with *Sarabhanandana* over *Simhanandana*. After God Nrusimha slew Hiranya and sucked rakshasa blood, He became furious. The Devas quaked with fear. Paramasiva took the form of Sarabha (Bird, Animal and Human blended into one) and relieved Nrusimhsa of the rakshasa blood to restore tranquility.'

'One can become spiritual, detached and even enlightened without depriving oneself of those enrichments of mind and heart which Culture can bring', said Paul Brunton. Sage Tiruvalluvar has given guidelines two thousand years ago to ensure this. If King Janaka proved the truth of this as a king, Syama Sastri did it as an eminent composer to prove that the noble life of a house-holder equally conduces a sincere soul to realise spiritual enlightenment.

371 16 *Add:* He composed padas, yakshaganas and the dramas '*Sivakamasundari Parinaya*' in telugu and '*Raja Ranjana Vidya Vilasa Nataka*' in sanskrit.

373 35 *For:* issueless .

*Read:* issueless. T.A.C. Singaracharyulu wrote in 1905 that Panchapikesayya, a grandson of Tyagaraja and disciple of Manambuchavadi Venkatasubba Ayyar, was a good songster but died at the age of twenty-two and that 'he would have been a master of art, if he had lived longer'. Probably the grandson had enjoyed a plurality of names – one out of affection and the other as per *namakarana*.

16 *For:* *Naradagana Lola - Atana raga*  
*Read:* *Varanarada - Vijayasri raga*

379 18 *For:* (18th century)

*Read:* (c. 1751 AD)

- 380 26 *Insert* below line 25 as a separate para:  
'Brahmam was a bibliophile and his Mutt has a good collection of manuscripts'. Muktopanishad Commentary was completed by him on December 17, 1751 which indicates his period clearly.
- 26 *Insert* on the right side: (1934 - July 25, 1991)
- 36 *Insert* below line 35:  
Kalaimamani by Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram  
State Artiste, Tamil Nadu.
- 381 27 *For*. 'weedings' *Read*: 'weddings'.
- 393 1 *For*. Chembal *Read*: Chembai.
- 394 15 Has attended the Festivals of India in the USA, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. Vaidyanathan was honoured with the Palghat Mani Ayyar Award in 1992 by the Percussive Arts Centre, Bangalore and the titles of 'Laya Vidya Dhurandara' and 'Sunada Layamani'.
- 395 39- Below line 38 *insert*:  
42 Made Chairmen, Tamilnadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram and Government of Tamil Nadu Raga Research Centre.  
T. Chowdiah Memorial National Award – Academy of Music, Bangalore 1992.  
Violin Isai Kalanidhi by Federation of Sabhas, Madras with a  
gold violin (25 sovereigns) 1992.
- 397 3 *Add*: A few of his songs were given by Singaracharyulu in his 'Gayakalochanam' like - *Nanda Govinda Murare (Saveri)* and *Chaitrotsavame Divya Vaibhavam (Sahana)*.
- 402 1 *For*. (b. July 3, 1928), *Read*: (July 3, 1928 - October 31, 1990)
- 403 *Insert* at the end of the page:  
The book '*Vasudeva Keerthana Manjari*' by Mathur Sankaramurti contains his compositions with notation. Vasudevachar had authored two books in kannada, viz., '*Nanu Kanda Kalavidaru*' (The Artistes I have seen) and '*Nenapugalu*' (Memoirs).
- 405 31 *For*. Panchapakesa Sastri *Read*: Panchapakesa Sastri.
- 21 *Add*: Pillai's '*Samaya Sanmarga Kirtanas*' are thoughtful compilations for a secular state being songs common to all religions underscoring spiritual and moral codes. It is believed that Saint Ramalinga Swamikal released them. (Different dates are given about his birth.)

- 404 33 *For.* (Oct.20, 1826 – July 1989),  
*Read:* (Octr.20, 1826 – July 31, 1889)
- 406 25 *For.* Reader in Music *Read:* Head of the Department of Music
- 408 18 *For.* (1901 - ), *Read:* (1901 - April 20, 1973)
- 411 6 *For.* Danappachariar *Read:* Tanappacharya
- 412 42 *For.* Hare Nipidakantaka *Read:* Are Nibida Kantaka
- 413 23 *Insert* below line 22:  
 The Music Academy, Madras awarded in 1965 a Certificate  
 of Merit.
- 415 8 *For.* SIRKAZHI *Read:* SIMIZHI
- 418 31 T.S. Parthasarathy writes that Bhagavatar's output of musical compositions cast in different moulds and patterns is prolific and variegated, 150 of them traced and seventy published by the Jayanti Committee, Ayyampettai. His signature is 'Sri Ramachandra Vankataramana'. Has followed Tyagaraja's word-building replete with assonance and prosodical beauties'. His jayanti was celebrated at Ayyampettai.
- 420 36 *Add:* Music Academy, Madras awarded him a Certificate of Merit.
- 426 31 *For:* having been *Read:* have been  
 36 *For.* koottuthadi'. *Read:* kottuthadi'.
- 427 3rd from bottom *For.* Tirtha, Dikshitar *Read:* Tirtha, Tyagaraja  
 12 *For:* the word 'and', *insert* a comma  
 14 Below line 13 *insert* :  
 Kalaimamani by Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram -1992.
- 429 last: *Enter* at the end:  
 T. Chowdiah State-level Award by the Academy of Music – 1992.
- 430 25 He learnt music under Chidambaram Sundaram Pillai.  
 32 After line 31, *Add:*  
 Vijayaraghavachariar was the recipient of various other titles and honours also like:  
 Fellowship of Sangita Nataka Academy  
 Keertana Kulasekhara from Sri Sankaracharya of Kanchi Kamakoti Math  
 Thyaga Mani by Mannargudi Rasikas  
 Katha Rasa Vada by Devakottai Rasikas  
 Geetha Katha Praveena by Pallathur Rasikas  
 Sangita Sahitya Ratna by Pallathur Rasikas  
 Asthana Vidwan of the Dharmapuram Mutt  
 Kalaimamani by the Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram  
 Sangita Kala Sikhamani by Indian Fine Arts Society.

Vijayaraghavachariar was an amiable person and had helped good causes with his discourses.

- 430 15 *For:* (b. November 24, 1909),  
*Read:* (Novr. 24, 1909 - June 2, 1991)
- 431 1 *For:* (b.1919), *Read:* (b. June 13, 1918)  
 12 *Insert below line 11:*  
 Kalaimamani from Tamil Nadu Eyal Isai Nataka Mandram (1980)
- 432 8 *Add:* His sublime sahitya with artistic finish carries other  
 signatures like Achyutha Varada, Mudandisa and  
 Unnadhapuraisa.
- 433 13- *Delete* the word 'and' insert a comma.  
 14 *For:* Festival: *Read:* Festival, Vadya Ratna by Narada Gana  
 Sabha, honours from Sadguru Gnanananda Sangeet Sammelan,  
 1991 and Certificate of Merit by Madras Music Academy.
- 437 5 *For:* by the *Read:* with the  
 7 *Add:* Has been named a National Heritage Fellow for 1992 by  
 the U.S. National Endowment for Arts.  
 23 *For:* (Todi) *Read:* (Khamas)
- 438 *Add:* at the end: The names of his parents are differently given  
 as Ramacharya and Sita Bai also. He had as many as twenty-  
 four disciples including Purandaradasa whom he initiated with  
 Dasa Diksha. Hari Dasa Cult reached its zenith during his period  
 and Purandara praises him in glorious terms. Vyasa was also  
 called Çandrikaçarya. He composed padas, suladis, vrittanamas  
 and kirtanas and one of the vrittanamas summarise the Bhagawad  
 Gita succinctly. The great scholar and composer was Rajaguru  
 to the illustrious kings of the Vijayanagar Empire and had shared  
 the throne like Govinda Dikshitar of Tanjore (*ardhasimhasana*).
- 439 3- *Insert below line 30:*  
 32 'For the Sake of Honour' Award of the Rotary Club, Madras  
 for 1990-91 for furthering National Integration.  
 Lata Mangeshkar Award by M.P. Government 1992.  
 33 Sangeetak Natak Akademy, Delhi Award 1992.
- 443 22 *For:* (b. June 20,1911) *Read:* (June 20, 1911 - Decr. 12, 1990)
- 443 *Add* at the end: With his analytical ear and keen intellect, he  
 prepared notation for a thousand kritis for All India Radio and  
 composed Vadya Vrindha pieces and choral music. Allam  
 Koteeswara Rao and A. Durga Prasad are among his disciples.

- 444 8 *For.* Vadarangan *Read.* Vadarangam
- 449 30 *Insert* as item (viii)
- viii. S. Vedanayagam Pillai availed of the services of Kundrakudi Venkatramier to set his songs to tune.
- 451 38 *For:* veena). *Read:* veena in July 1985 at Sri Anantapadmanabhaswamy Temple, Adyar, Madras covering 137 songs in which five ragas were used thrice and twenty-four ragas twice, besides three ragamalikas.
- 451 Last line: *Add:* This record was broken on December 19-20, 1988 by A. Kanyakumari at Sri Anantapadmanabhaswamy temple, Adyar, Madras with a performance of 29 hours non-stop
- 452 27 *For:* player *Read:* player on
- 455 39 *For:* Vaitheeswarankoil *Read:* Anandathandavapuram.
- 469 5 *For:* 425000 *Read:* 475000
- 469 17 *For :* Balaganakamaya *Read:* Namo Namo Raghavaya (Desiya Todi)
- 478 18 *For:* Natesan *Read:* Natesan and Tirukkodikaval Krishna Ayyar.
- 479 26 *Insert* below line 25:
- viii. Sonti Venkataramaniah by Mummadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar, Mysore.
- ix. Tiruvarur Rajayee by Rajah of Ramnad.
- x. Yagna Narayana Dikshitar by Rajah Raghunatha
- xi. Maduravani Naik.
- 480 15 *Enter* below line 14:
- iv. Vina Seshanna played violin to Mysore Vasudevacharya.
- v. Sangita Kalanidhi Mudicondan Venkatarama Ayyar had given kanjira support to Tiruvarur Rajayee, his disciple. It was indeed a brave gesture as male chauvinism was dead against it.
- vi. The flute maestro Sarabha Sastri gave violin support to Kumbakonam Natesa Dikshitar's vocal concert at the residence of Soolamangalam Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar and to Tirunaithanam Narasimha Bhagavatar at Solaiappan Street, Kumbakonam.

481 22- *For. me**Read: him.*

500 6 *Add: 'Singing bereft of alankaras will be colourless as night without moon, river without water, creeper without flowers and lady without ornaments.' – Natya Sastra.*

534 *For. Soundaralli N.G.**Read: Soundaravalli, N.C.*

## PARADISE ON EARTH

"If we were to look over the whole world to find out the country most richly endowed with all the wealth, power and beauty that nature can bestow - in some parts a very paradise on earth - I should point to India."

"If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered over the greatest problems of life, and has found solutions of some of them which well deserve the attention even of those who have studied Plato and Kant - I should point to India. And if I were to ask myself from what literature, we in Europe.... may draw the corrective which is most wanted in order to make our inner life more perfect, more comprehensive, more universal, in fact more truly humane a life, not only this life, but a transfigured and eternal life - again I should point to India."

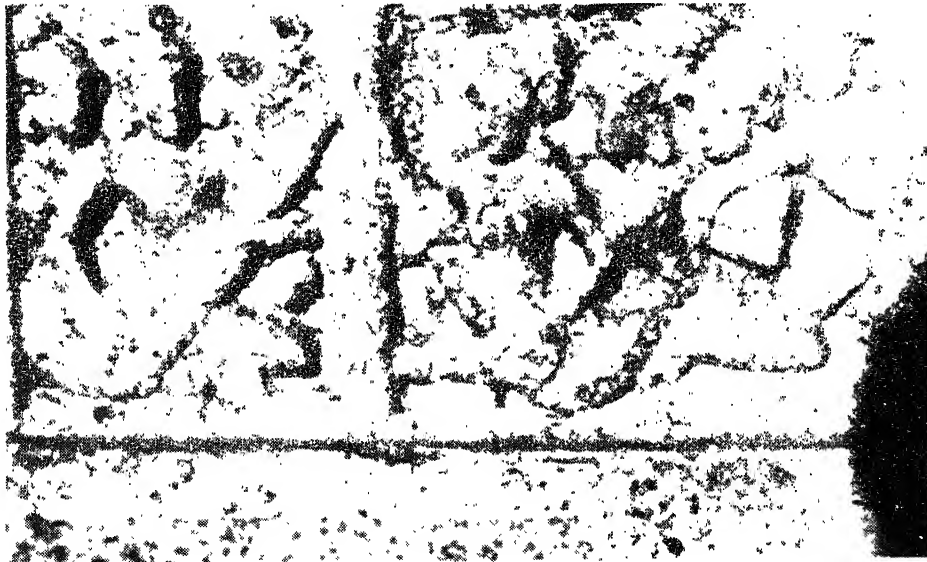
— Prof. Max Muller in his lectures at Cambridge in 1882.

India was the motherland of our race, and Sanskrit the mother of Europe's languages; she was the mother of our philosophy; mother, through the Arabs, of much of our mathematics; mother, through the Buddha, of the ideals embodied in Christianity; mother, through the village community, of self government and democracy. Mother India is in many ways, the mother of us all."

— Will Durant.



(Vocalist S. Rajam and Dr. Veena S. Balachander).



– Panels from the sculpture of Chola period in the temple of Ponsai, Tanjore District.

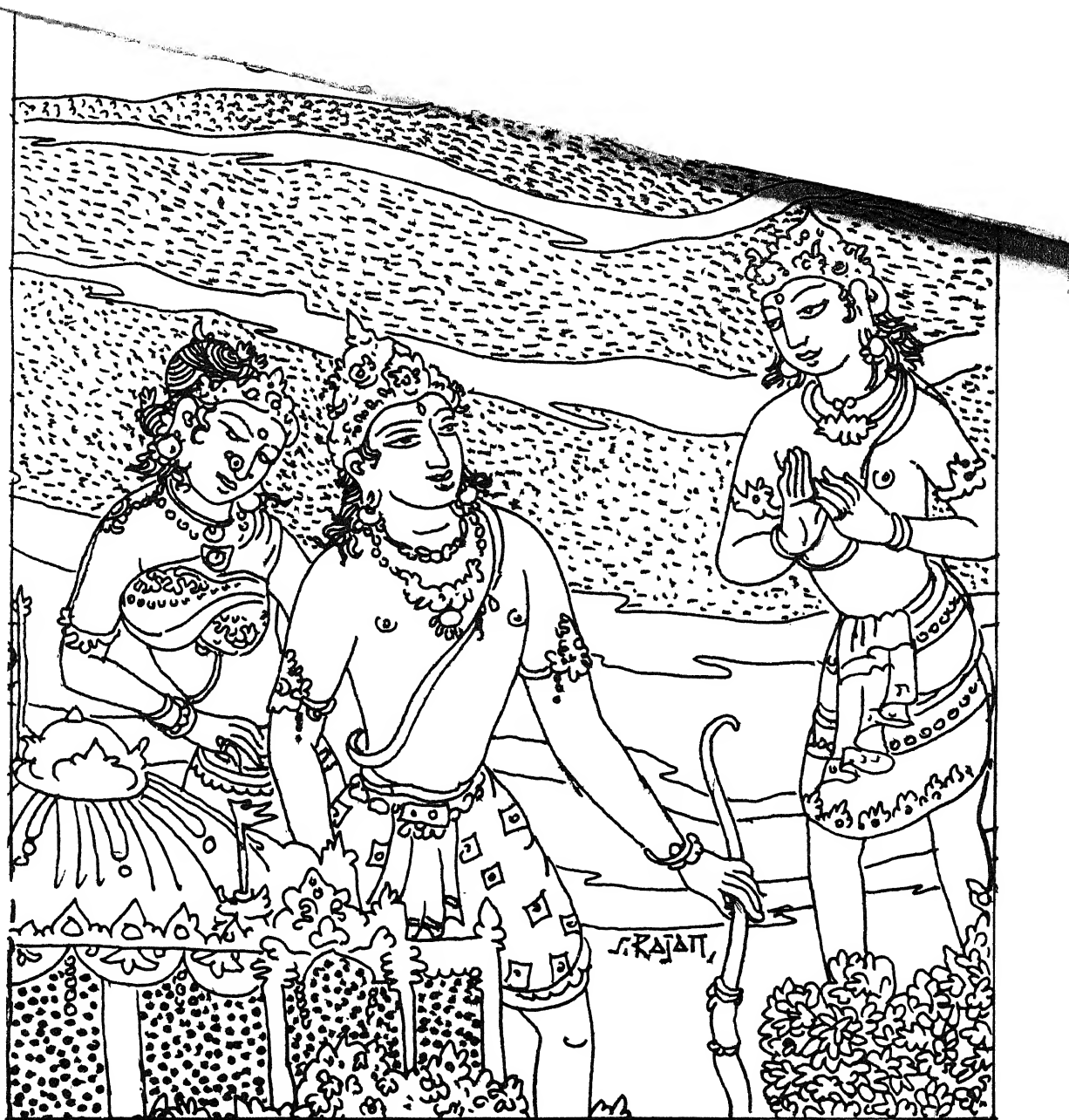


Ravi Kiran, the child prodigy giving a concert at the Music Academy at the age of 2-3. Unmatched achievement !



K.B. Sundarambal, the vibrant musician with matinee idols  
Dr.M.G. Ramachandran, former Chief Minister and  
Dr. Selvi Jayalalitha, present Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu.





"Let Us Skip Tiruvaiyaru" - The Celestials arrive at Tiruvaiyaru.

# **ANOTHER GARLAND**

**(Biographical Dictionary  
of Carnatic  
Composers & Musicians)**

By

**N. RAJAGOPALAN**

**CARNATIC CLASSICALS, Madras - 600 020 India**

## PART IV

### THE ASCENT

‘The Indian civilization had reached the summit of human thought.’

— Ralph Waldo Emerson.

Where are we now ?

## A

## GLOSSARY

Alapana	Extempore, creative, innovative, inventive delineation and improvisation of a raga to bring out its innate grace and grandeur. It is the soul of Indian music.						
Alankara	Ornament, embellishment. An artistic combination of notes for developing a raga; also swara exercises for beginners.						
Anupallavi	Second section of a varna, padam, kriti, javali, etc. A musical composition of the above description normally has three sections, viz., <table> <tr> <td>pallavi</td><td>- the initial section,</td></tr> <tr> <td>anupallavi</td><td>- the second or intermediate section and</td></tr> <tr> <td>charanam</td><td>- the third and final section.</td></tr> </table>	pallavi	- the initial section,	anupallavi	- the second or intermediate section and	charanam	- the third and final section.
pallavi	- the initial section,						
anupallavi	- the second or intermediate section and						
charanam	- the third and final section.						
Arohana	Ascending order of notes - Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni.						
Avarohana	Descending order of notes - Ni, Dha, Pa, Ma, Ga, Ri, Sa.						
	NOTE: The incidence of the different notes in their different shades in the arohana and the avarohana, their relative order, etc., vary according to the individual janaka, janya, vakra, varja, etc, ragas. The incidence and the order settle the scope and other characteristics of a raga.						
Bani	Style, way, marga, method; where the 'style' of rendition of a musician sets a particular method, grace, unique feature, etc., it is called his 'bani'.						
Bhajan	Singing devotional songs in chorus or otherwise. It is normally done during poojahs, festive occasions, etc. Bhajan styles vary from region to region.						

**The longest recorded bhajan is the Akhand Ram Dhun started by Acharya Prem Bhikuji at Jamnagar on July 31, 1964 which was continued till 1988 by devotees and perhaps later too. (GBR).**

Bhajan is normally congregational singing of devotional songs couched in simple language (sahitya) set to brisk, invigorating pace (laya) and catchy, captivating tunes to con-

vey the endeavour of the heart and its anxiety to attain spiritual salvation and the Ultimate and to portray the expressive urge of the Jeevatma (soul) to reach and merge in the Paramatma. Bhajan transports the devout to ecstatic frenzy, frenzied ecstasy and divine inspiration.

Bhava Charanam Soul of expression of music. The essence of a raga.

Dhatu The music in a composition which gives it life.

Durita kala Fast tempo.

Gamaka An essential ingredient of soulful, satisfying music. Includes voice modulations, graces, vibrations, embellishments and curves which leave a pleasant experience on the listener. Musical movements aesthetically rendered and employed judiciously. Gamaka variations resemble the wave action and wave durations and lengths in oceans and lakes.

**‘Music without gamaka is like a moonless night, a river without water, a creeper without flowers or a lady without ornaments’ says Palkurki Somanatha Kavi (14th century).** He mentions 22 gamakas in his kavya, *‘Pandiitharadhya Charitra.’*

Ghana ragas The traditional five ragas called ‘ghana’ ragas are Nata, Gaula, Arabi, Sri Raga and Varali, the individuality of which is brought out in madhyama kala or tana

Kedaram, Narayanagaula, Ritigaula, Saranganata and Bauli are bunched as another group of ghana ragas.

The term ‘ghana’ is also taken as meaning vast scope in the ragas for improvisation.

Gita A simple melodic composition of raga without divisions and without intricacies used for beginners.

Gramas Basic Scales of ancient times.

Janaka raga A sampurna, principal, primary, fundamental, root or karta raga consisting of all the seven notes and listed in the Melakartha Scheme of seventy-two of Venkatamakhin or of Govindacharya. Has krama, sampurna ascending and descending notes of the same kind.

Janya raga A derivative, off-spring raga - each janya raga being traced to a janaka raga. Classified under varja, upanga, bashanga and swarantara. Some janya ragas are traced to more than one

melakarta.

Jatiswaram	Swara Pallavi. Similar in musical structure to swarajati but without sahityam or text, words.
Javali	Songs of erotic nature which are captivating, catchy. <i>Vide Part III E.</i>
Jeevatma	Soul. 'The concept of jeevatma seeking the services of a mediator/messenger for its merger in the Paramatma - God is given a personality in kavyas, natakas and musical compositions.' (T.S.B. Sastrigal)
Kala	Speed, tempo - Durita or fast, madhyama or medium, vilambita or slow tempos.
Konugol or Konnakol	Practical art of reciting the jatis, talas by mouth without any instrument by using the syllables used in mridangam adding appropriate sounds for variety. A rare art. (Supplies the role of a ' <i>upa-vadhya</i> ').
Kriti/Kirtan	A composition or song in the normal pattern with a pallavi, one or more charanams and with or without anupallavi. Kirtan is normally a devotional piece where text is more important than music. In Kriti, music is more important. In a sense, Kirtan is for bhakti rasa and Kriti is for gana rasa.
Laya	Rhythm, tempo.
Lakshana gita	Gita in which the text enumerates or illustrates the raga lakshanas - conveying the basis and framework of a raga.
Madhyamakala or Tana	Also called ghanam. A branch of creative music. 'In this style of raga development, the music is measured, though not into so many clear-cut avartas.'
Manodharma	Improvisation - creative, extempore, spontaneous musical delineation covering raga alapana, kalpana swara, pallavi, neraval and tana, bringing out technical and imaginative skill and expertise as well as originality. Manodharma is the soul, the <i>jeeva</i> , the <i>sine qua non</i> of Carnatic music. Manodharma excludes prosaic repetition, notation-based music.
Margadarsi	Trail-blazer, pioneer, forerunner who shows the path, marga in composition, singing, etc., to others to follow. Eg. Adipayya is called 'Tana Varna Margadarsi'.
Matra	A unit of time measure in tala.
Matu	Sahitya, text of a song. May comprise words or swara syll-

ables or both. Jatiswaram has no matu.

Mudra	Signature of individual composer.
Murchanas	The new scales obtained by shifting the keynote ( sadja ) in a scale.
Nadai	Rhythmic mode.
Nadham	Musical sound. Minute understanding of sounds in creation or otherwise which conveys a sensation, feeling, emotion, etc.  ' <i>Nada Yoga</i> leads to salvation. Lose yourself in <i>Nada</i> , which is associated with variations of ragas. The person that does not float in the ocean of <i>Sangitajnana</i> is a burden to the earth! One must be blessed with that gift to become a <i>jivanmukta</i> .' – Tyagaraja.
Nadopasana	Dedication to Music.  'Attain the highest bliss by losing yourself in <i>Nada</i> . The Trinity, all the gods and great sages had followed the path. To realise the nature of <i>Nada</i> is itself bliss and salvation. The true devotee who has knowledge of ragas becomes a Mukta forthwith.' – Tyagaraja.  'Saraswati, the Goddess of Wisdom delights in music emanating from the flute and the veena.' – Muthuswami Dikshitar.
Neraval	Phrasing, developing, expounding the text with raga subtleties, variations, tempos to bring out the hidden beauty of raga and demonstrate the musical expertise of the musician. It is traced by R. Vedavalli to Rupaka Alapathi of <i>Sangeetha Ratnakara</i> and to <i>Ragalath pattalath</i> of <i>Çilappadikaram</i> .
Nirupana	Exposition of the moral, philosophical and devotional episodes from epics, etc., in a stirring emotional manner through sweet, poetical and suggestive compositions combining entertainment with enlightenment.
Pada	Scholarly composition - devotional or sringara as those of Purandara Dasa, Muthu Thandavar, Kshetragna and Ghanam Krishna Ayyar. <i>Vide</i> Part III E too.
Prabandha	Popular musical composition. (They had four sections - Udgraha, Melapaka, Dhruva and Abhoga. Jayadeva ash-tapadis are of dhruva dhatu. 'Dhruva prabandhas copied in other languages came to be known as Dhruvad' - Dr. (Mrs.) V. Chandomkar.)
Pallavi	The first section of kriti or kirtan. <i>Vide</i> anupallavi. Pallavi under manodharma sangita is different. Pallavi singing is

special exposition and delineation of 'pada, laya vinyasa'. It is the test of the originality and ability of the singer. The limit is sky-high. *Vide* Part III too.

Pa = Pada or words,

La = Laya or rhythm,

Vi = Vinyasa or exposition.

## Raga

'*Ranjayatee iti Ragah*'. That which gives delight is raga. The term is stated to have been first used by Matanga in '*Brihad-desi*'. Melody mould, type or entity. Melodious arrangement of musical notes to express a definite mood, emotion with a distinct individuality reproducing a feeling or indicating a mood due to the individualistic notes and gamakas. Though not unrelated to sahitya, raga is the soul of music being a combination of notes of different pitches producing varied, pleasing, expected effect on the listener. Raga in Carnatic music is gamaka-based; has 'swroopa' lent by the ascending-descending notes, traditional application and time-honoured usages.

'A raga is that kind of composition which is adorned with musical notes in some peculiarly stationary or ascending, or descending or moving values which have the effect of colouring the hearts of men.' — B.C. Deva.

A coherent combination of notes possessing latent power of producing aesthetic emotion, producing aesthetic sentiment. Raga is the root of classical Carnatic music. Raga characteristics according to Sanskrit works: Thirteen (Trayodasa):

Graha	The note on which the raga commences.
Amsa	The note which reveals the melodic entity of the raga-swroopa-the jiva swara. "
Nyasa	The note on which the raga is concluded.
Mandra & Tara	The lowest and the highest notes beyond which the raga elaboration need not go.
Alpatva	The note that is used rarely in raga.
Bahutva	The note that is used frequently in raga.
Apanyasa Vinyasa Sanyasa	The ending notes of intermediate phrases in the course of raga alapana.
Shadava	Application of six notes.



Audava	Application of five notes.
Antara	The introduction of a note not belonging to
Marga	a raga - (anya swara). - (Prof. P. Sambamurti)

Govinda Dikshitar gives the following 'angas' of a raga:

i) Akshiptika	-	First part of a raga (āyattam)
ii) Ragavardhini	-	Taking off (ēduppu)
iii) Vidari	-	Eduppu Muktai
iv) Sthayi	-	Melodic phase
v) Vartani	-	Creation of tanas around varied notes of the raga.
vi) Nyasa	-	The note on which raga ends. Muktai.

Now there is scope for looking into ragas from other aspects.

Rasa	Feelings, emotions are of nine kinds being –  Sringara (romance), Hasya (humour), Karuna (pathos), Vira (heroism), Bhayanaka (fear), Rowdra (anger), Bibhatsa (disgust), Adbhuta (surprise), Santa (patience).  Bhakti (devotion), Vatsalya (solicitude), Çoka (sadness) and Ananda (happiness) are also of this category with aesthetic content or emotional appeal.
Ragamalika	A composition, wherein each section bears a distinct raga or tune, the tala being constant - e.g. ragamalika kirtan or varna.
Raga Tala Malika	A composition where each section bears not only a distinct raga but also a distinct tala. i.e. different raga and tala for each section.
Sahitya	Matu, the composition or the text.
Sangati	Step of embellishment. The artistic device is attributed to Tyagaraja. <i>Chakkani Raja</i> has as many as forty-two musical step by step progress to the climax. Other songs have similar sangatis.
Sringara	Romanticism, love on an elevated plane. <i>Vide</i> Part III–E.  'As different from sensuousness, Sringara is enlivening and ennobling. Devotional and music literature are replete with sahityas where the nayaki-nayaka bhava is the base on which the whole edifice of love had been constructed shorn of any semblance of eroticism. Kuttala Kuravanji is one such pre-eminent piece. ' — Swamimalai Rajarethinam.
Sruti	The lowest audible sound or keynote, a microtone, Sruti provides the basic musical plane on which the pitch of the

musician and the entire musical exercise are built up. Where sruti is violated, music loses its equilibrium, sweetness and satisfying effect. Sruti violation is akin to derailment; it jolts and disturbs.

Sthayi

Melodic phase. Range fixed for swaras - Seven swaras from Sa. to Ni. Five levels:-

Anumandara -	octave below mandra sthayi: Sa Ri Ga Ma
Mandara	lower octave: Ni Dha Pa
Madhya -	Middle octave
Tara -	higher octave: Sa Ri Ga Ma
Atitara -	Octave above tara sthayi: Sa Ri Ga Ma

Swara

Musical note

Swarajati

Composition with pallavi, anupallavi and charanam in different dhatus producing pleasing melody. Similar to jatiswaram, which has, however, no sahitya or text.

Sampradaya

'Tradition of music, handed down through centuries of experience, research and knowledge conditioned by factors like time, region, standards of appreciation among rasikas and the capacity of artistes.'

Tala

Time-cycle containing one or more sub-time measures. Rhythm or summation of units of time. There are 128 talas.

'Tala is rhythmic arrangement of beats in a cyclic manner. Each cycle is complete in itself and is repetitive. The cycle is divided into sections which may or may not be equal. It is formed by the addition of time units in a defined manner. There are many styles according to their emphasis or rhythm, extent of ornamentation, lyrical qualities, etc.'

— B. Chaitanya Deva.

Tana

A rapid succession of notes to elaborate or expound a musical idea.

Tillana

A composition with jatis, brisk and interspersed with swaras, etc.

Tsouka kala (Chowka kala)	Elongated time-measure or tempo. Scope for 'akaram is provided'.
Vaggeyakara	<p>Composer or author of song.</p> <p>'A composer has to be a poet, musician and grammarian - all in one.'</p> <p>'A vaggeyakara is expected to be a person of rare attainment; a good composer, that is. For he should not be a mere song writer or music-maker. The good composition, apart from anything else, has to have the basic quality of expansion and elaboration. Hence a vageyakara has to possess –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a thorough grounding in linguistic grammar,</li> <li>- mastery over the lexicon,</li> <li>- a command of prosody,</li> <li>- a profound knowledge of the rasa theory,</li> <li>- an insight into the sixty-four arts.</li> <li>- a fine voice,</li> <li>- an immense control over raga, tala and laya,</li> <li>- intimacy with traditional and contemporary trends and</li> <li>- a capacity to render gamakas in all octaves.</li> </ul> <p>This is a tall order!! Hence it is that composers who are genius are understandably rare.'</p>
Varnam	<p>Composition with minimum words providing scope to bring out raga bhava or lakshana. Tana varnas are sung or played at the commencement of concerts to give it a crisp start and create and generate a concert tempo. They are practised by students to acquire and assimilate the raga bhava and structure. Pada varnas are for dancers.</p> <p>Language portion is normally limited to pallavi in tana varnam while it covers the whole piece in tsouka varnam.</p>
Vidwan (Musician)	Categories are five:
<i>Sikshakara</i>	A seasoned singer or a teacher with systematic training - sincere, earnest and efficient.
<i>Anukara</i>	A bani-based musician - one who fashions his music on the model of another.
<i>Rasika</i>	One whose music is the essence of sweetness or one who is absorbed in his own music.
<i>Ranjaka</i>	One who captivates the hearts of listeners or who builds up rapport with listeners.

*Bhavuka* A creative genius who springs surprises and appeals even to an indifferent listener.

*Yogi* One who has achieved total control over his faculties in his endeavour to attain the Ultimate by penance, self-denial, abstinence and prayer.

'The yogi is thought to be superior to the ascetics and even superior to men-of-knowledge (mere scholars); he is also superior to men-of-action; therefore (you strive to) be a yogi, Arjuna..'

(*Bhagawad-Geeta. VI-46*)

— Swami Chinmayananda.



## PLANT HAS NO MUSIC

Man has a rather sophisticated brain and a central nervous system. Plants do not have them and so have no central processing unit to enable intelligent behaviour. They cannot respond to music. It is said, 'One may love a plant but in assuming that it reciprocates, is only transferring his feelings or mirroring his mind. Struck by the parallel to the electrical signal transmission that occurs in the nervous system of animals, Sir J.C. Bose had possibly remarked, more in a spirit of poetic licence than scientific rigour, that plants also "feel". Such pronouncements from eminent men tend to become legendary.'

— D. Bakasubramaniam, CCMB, Hyderabad.

So, J.C. Bose was but a fellow-traveller of Subrahmania Bharati who ruled that man belongs to the same tribe as the crow and the sparrow - a gesture of poetic solicitude, product of a vibrant mind and a bounteous heart (*mens sana in corpore sano*).

The latest instance of exploding plant sensitivity myth in fiction is '*The Doomsday Conspiracy*' of Sidney Sheldon wherein a Professor after two weeks of experiments says,

**'The flowers exposed to rock music were dead ;  
The group with no music was growing normally ; and  
The ones that heard the sitar music had turned into  
beautiful blooms with stems and flowers  
reaching towards the source of the sound.'**

Mentioning this derisive comment, C.V. Gopalakrishnan writes that there is no reason to write off the prospects of scientists returning to Bose's monistic universalism.

# B

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### ABSOLUTE INTEGRITY

‘Toscanini’s concert has been a musical experience of the rarest and finest kind . . . a revelation of the wonder and nobility of music and genius . . . It is profane almost to speak of Toscanini’s Brahms, of Toscanini’s Wagner, and so forth. **He does not give us anybody’s Brahms or anybody’s Wagner, but Brahms’s Brahms and Wagner’s Wagner . . .** never stands between us and the music, never plays tricks with it . . .’

—Sir Neville Cardus

In Carnatic music parlance, the same idea is stressed when it is said that the *bhava* and *rasa* of the composition and the composer should be brought to full focus by the singer. Certainly bharatanatya enforces the norm. It could not be said of all musicians. **The syllabus should provide for inculcating this vital need. This is an issue for deep consideration.**

## C

## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF COMPOSERS & MUSICIANS DEALT WITH IN 'A GARLAND' & 'ANOTHER GARLAND'

**Note :** Only the artistes for whom the periods have been mentioned against their names in part II are generally shown herein.

Bharata	c. 400 B.C. - 200 A.D.
Dattila	c. 200 B.C - 200 A.D.
Narada (Siksha)	1st Century A.D.
Illango	2nd Century A.D.
Rajah Mahendra Varman	590 - 630 A.D.
Matanga Muni	7th - 8th Century
Kalladar	8th - 11th Century.
Sriman Nathamuni	c. 823 A.D.
Achalananda Dasa	9th Century.
Rajah Someswara Malla	c. 1116 - 1138
Basavanna	1125 -
Haripala	c. 1170 (or c.1310)
Parsvadeva	c. 1250
Jayadeva	12th Century
Narahari Tirtha	13th Century
Samgadeva	13th Century
Sripadaraya	13th Century
Gopala Naik	13th / 14th Century
Vidyaranya	1320 - 1380
Simha Bhupala II	1330 - 1390
Kallinadha	1400 - 1465
Annamacharya, Tallapaka	1408 - 1503
Guru Basava	c. 1430
Maharana Khumba (Kumbhakarna)	1433 - 1468
Vyasaraja	1447 - 1539
St. Arunagirinathar	c. 1450
Vadiraja	c. 1480 - 1600
Purandaradasa	1484 - 1564
Subhankara	15th Century
Kanakadasa	1508 - 1606
Pundarika Vittala	1510 - 1576
Somanatha	c. 1550 - 1609
Rama Matya	c. 1550
Nijaguna yogi	c. 1560
Sadasiva Brahmendral	c. 1560 - 1762
Swami Narayana Tirtha	1580 - 1680
Catura Damodara Panditha	16th Century
Thathachariar @ Miyandanchin	16th Century

Muthu Thandavar	16th Century.
Govinda Dikshitar	16th / 17th Century.
Rajah Reghunatha Naik	c. 1600 - 1630
Mummadi Chikka Bhupala	1600 - 1760
Sadguru Sri Bodendra Swamigal	1610 - 1692
Bhadrachala Ramadasa	1622 - 1680
Vendrimalai Kavirayar	1624 - 1682
Sri Sridhara Venkatesa Arya	1630 - 1730
Venkatamakhin	c. 1635 - 1660
Ananda Dasa	1650 -
Ahobala	c. 1650
Chikka Devaraja Wodeyar	1673 - 1704
Karvetinagar Sarangapani	1680 - 1750
Govindasamayya & Koovanasamayya	c. 1680 - 1710
Maharajah Shahaji II of Tanjore	1684 - 1712
Vijaya Dasa	1687 - 1763
Uthukadu Venkatasubbayyar (Krishna Gana)	1700 - 1765
Govinda Matya	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 200px; height: 60px; margin: 0 10px;"></div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div style="margin-bottom: 5px;">←</div> <div style="margin-top: 5px;">→</div> </div> </div>
Kshetragna	
Margadarsi Sesha Ayyangar	
Giriraja Kavi	
	17th Century

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Thayumanavar	1705 - 1742
Arunachala Kavirayar	1711 - 1778
Marimutha Pillai	1712 - 1787
Jagannadha Dasa	1726 - 1809
Rajah Thulajaji of Tanjore	c. 1728 - 1736
Munipalli Subramania Kavi	1730 - 1780
Ramaswami Dikshitar	1735 - 1817
Ramapurathu Warriar	c. 1750
Toomu Narasimha Dasa	1750 - 1820
Upanishad Brahman Yogin	c. 1751
Syama Sastri (of Trinity), Sri	1762 - 1827
Ghanam Bobbili Kesavayya	1763
Tyagaraja (of Trinity), Sri	1767 - 1847
Subbukutti Ayya	c. 1770 - 1854
Muthuswami Dikshitar (of Trinity), Sri	1776 - 1835
Vinayaka Sastriar	1776 - 1864
Sri Sadguru Swamigal, Marudanallur	1777 - 1817
Chinnaswami Dikshitar	1778 - 1823
Wallajahpet Venkataramana Bhagavatar	1781 - 1874
Pallavi Doraiswami Ayyar	1782 - 1816
Irayi Amman Tampi	1782 - 1856
Baluswami Dikshitar	1786 - 1859
Pallavi Gopala Ayyar	1790 -
Ghanam Krishna Ayyar	1790 - 1854

Varahappa Dikshit Pandit	1795 - 1869
Raja Serfoji II (Sarabhoji )	1798 - 1832
Shatkala Govinda Marar	1790 - 1854
Vina Kuppayyar	1798 - 1904
Ananta Padmanabha Goswami @ Meruswami	1800 - 1870
Appukutti Nattuvan	c. 1800
Atana Appayya	c. 1800
Todi Sitaramayyar	c. 1800
Pallavi Sivaramier	c. 1800
Periatirukundram Subbarama Ayyar	c. 1800
Mohanam Varadaraja Ayyar	c. 1800
Edamanal Lingappa Naidu	c. 1800 - 1871

Veena Anantayya & Veena Kuppayya  
 Pacchimiriya Adippayya  
 Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati  
 Akalanka Givindacharya  
 Gurumurthi Sastri, Paidala  
 Kasinatha  
 Kavi Mathrubhutayya  
 Bhooloka Gandarva Narayanaswami Ayyar  
 Papanasam Mudaliar  
 Ghanam Sinnayya  
 Tirubhuvanam Swaminatha Ayyar  
 Senthil Velannavi  
 Kudirai Vaidyanatha Ayyar  
 Vaikunta Sastrigal  
 Irumbukadalai Venkatarama Ayyar  
 Sonti Venkatasubba Ayyar  
 Vijayagopala  
 Tsoukam Veerabhadrayya  
 Sonti Venkataramanayya  
 Madura Kavi Bharati

18th century

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Tanjore Quartette (Ponniah, Vadivelu. etc.)	c. 1801 - 1856
Subbaraya Sastri	1803 - 1862
Venkatadri Swami Jeer	1806 - 1876
Lalgudi Rama Ayyar	1807 - 1867
Krishnamurti Sastri	1810 -
Chengalvaraya Sastri	1810 - 1910
Kavi Kunjara Bharati	1810 - 1896
Gopala Krishna Bharati	1811 - 1881
Swati Tirunal Maharajah	1813 - 1846
Kannayya Bhagavatar	c. 1813 - 1846
Noorani Parameswara Bhagavatar	1815 - 1892
Kundrakudi Krishna Ayyar	1816 - 1889
Kulasekhara Perumal	- 1820

Kavi Venkatasuri Swamigal	1817 - 1889
Kuttikunju Thankachi	1820 - 1908
Vallalar Ramalinga Swamigal	1823 - 1874
Tarangambadi Panchanada Ayyar	1824 - 1874
Wallajahpet Krishnaswami Bhagavatar	1824 -
Kanjira Radhakrishna Ayyar	c. 1825
Vedanayakam Pillai	1826 - 1889
Trivandram Raghava Ayyar	1826 -
S. Annaswami Sastri	1827 - 1900
Sivarama Chiramal	1827 - 1897
Chinnuswami Dasar	1828 - 1881
Kanchipuram Rangachariar	
Duritakala Krishnaier	
Kanjira Krishnamachariar	c. 1830
Andemi Sivarama Bhagavatar	
Pallavi Narasimha Ayyangar	1832 - 1924
Tanjore Sarndha Veeraswami Naidu	c. 1833
Tachur Singaracharyulu Brothers	1834 - 1916
Ramaswami Sivan	1839 - 1897
Subbarama Dikshitar	1839 - 1906
Nilakanta Sivan	1839 - 1900
Tirunelveli Krishnaswami Ayyar	1840 - 1900
Tanjore Krishna Bhagavatar	1841 - 1903
Pallavi Sesa Ayyar	1842 - 1909
Maha Vaidyanatha Ayyar	1844 - 1893
Tiruvotriyur Tyagayyar	1845 - 1917
Patnam Subramania Ayyar	1845 - 1902
Umayalpuram Ananta Bharati	1845 - 1905
Das Swamigal @ Madathipathi	c. 1845 - 1925
Suchindram Sankaranarayana Bhagavatar	1846 - 1888
Ettayapuram Ramachandra Bhagavatar	1846 - 1915
Valadi Radhakrishna Ayyar	1849 - 1908
Kundrakudi Venkatarama Ayyar	c. 1850
Achyuthadasa	c. 1850
Urayur Muthuswamy	c. 1850
Veena Seshanna	c. 1850 - 1926
Tanjore Sethurama Rao	c. 1850 - 1920
Dolak Nannu Mia Saheb	c. 1850
Tirunelveli Vengu Bhagavatar	1854
Hullahalli Ramanna	1854 - 1918
Dr. U.Ve. Swaminatha Ayyar	1855 - 1942
Bakshi Subbanna	1855 - 1938
Swarabat Kannuswami Rao	1855 - 1936
Tirukodikaval Krishna Ayyar	1857 - 1913
Konnakol Pakkiriiah Pillai	1857 - 1937
Abraham Pandithar	1859 - 1919
Vanamamalai Brothers	1859 - 1915
Bangalore Acchanna	c. 1860
Vaideeswarankoil Subbarama Ayyar	c. 1860

Kattu Suranna	c. 1860
Appaswami Ayyar	c. 1860
Maharajah Ayilyam Tirunal	c. 1860 - 1880
Tanjore Thukaram	c. 1860 - 1900
Karur Quartette	1860 - 1967
T.P. Kodandarama Ayyar	1861 - 1934
Tirupanandal Pattabhiramiah	c. 1863
Azhaganambi Pillai	1863 - 1926
Suchindram Padmanabha Bhagavata	1863 - 1949
Adibhatla Narayana Das	1864 - 1945
T. Lakshmana Pillai	1864 - 1950
Manathattai Doraiswami Ayyar	1865 - 1926
Annamalai Reddiar	1865 - 1890
Mysore Vasudevachar	1865 - 1961
Veena Venkataramana Das	1866 - 1948
Bidaram Krishnappa	1866 - 1931
Pandit Subramania Sastri	1867 - 1941
Palghat Anantarama Bhagavata	1867 - 1919
Ramnad (Poochi) Srinivasa Ayyangar	1867 - 1919
Attoor Krishna Pisharody	1867 - 1964
Umayalpuram Swaminatha Ayyar	1867 -
Mylattur Krishna Ayyar	c. 1868 - 1922
Veena Dhanammal	1868 - 1938
K.C. Kesava Pillai	1868 - 1930
Tirupazhanam Panchapakesa Sastri	1868 - 1924
Ammachatram Kannuswami Pillai	1869 - 1923
Citrakavi Sivarama Bhagavata	1869 - 1951
Tanjore Pakkiri Pillai	1869 - 1922
Tiruppamburam Natarajasundaram Pillai	1869 -
Tanjore Rama Rao	1870 -
Kotiswara Ayyar	1870 - 1936
Pazhamaneri Swaminatha Ayyar	1870 - 1942
Coimbatore Thayee	1872 - 1917
Meesu Krishna Ayyar	1872 - 1940
Sarabha Sastri	1872 - 1904
T.S. Sabhesa Ayyar	1872 - 1948
Tumarada Sangameswara Sastri	1873 - 1932
Ammapettai Pakkiriath Pillai	1874 - 1920
Adoni Hanumanta Bhattar	c. 1875
Illupur Veeraswami Nattuvan	c. 1875
Annadhana Sastriar	1875
Pudukottai Dakshinamurti Pillai	1875 - 1937
Palani Krishna Ayyar	1876 - 1908
Tiger Varadachariar	1876 - 1950
Veena Varadayya	1877 - 1952
Harikesanallur Muthiah Bhagavata	1877 - 1945
Bangalore Nagarathinammal	1878 - 1952
Dr. T. Srinivasaraghavan	1878 - 1949

Tiruvalaputhur Pasupathiah Pillai	1879 - 1958
M.K.M. Ponnuswami Pillai	1879 - 1929
Malaikottai Govindaswami Pillai	1879 - 1931
Kallidaikurichi Vedantam Bhagavatar	1879
Veena Vaidyanatha Ayyar, Mayuram	c. 1880
Kothavasal Venkatarama Ayyar	c. 1880
Ennapadam Venkatarama Bhagavatar	1880
Mayuram Veenai Vaidyanatha Ayyar	c. 1880
Mangudi Chidambara Bhagavathar	1880 - 1938
Sembanarkoil Ramaswami Pillai	1880 - 1920
Anayampatti Subba Ayyar	1881 - 1961
Kalakad N. Subbiah Bhagavatar	1881 - 1955
Mahakavi Subramania Bharati	1882 - 1921
Raja Jagadishwara Venkateswara Ettappan	1882
T.K. Sessa Ayyangar	1882
Palladam Sanjeeva Rao	1882
Chidambaram Srirangachariar	1883 - 1943
Karaikudi Veena Subbarama Ayyar	1883 - 1936
Marungapuri Gopalakrishna Ayyar	1883 - 1968
Parupalli Ramakrishnayya Pantulu	1883
R. Nagaraja Rao	1883
Simizhi Sundaram Ayyar	1884 - 1927
Hari Nagabhushanam	1884 - 1959
Madurai Pushpavanam	1885 - 1917
C. Subramania Ayyar (C.S. Ayyar )	1885 - 1960
P. Veeriah Chowdry	1886
Prof. R. Srinivasan	1887 - 1975
Ramaniah Chettiar	1887 - 1961
Mysore Venkatagiriappa	1887 - 1952
Madirimangalam Natesa Ayyar	1888 - 1940
K. Ponniah Pillai	1888 - 1945
Karaikudi Veena Sambasiva Ayyar	1888 - 1958
Lakshmiratnammal	1888 - 1940
Madras Balakrishna Ayyar	1888
Mazhavarayanandal Subbarama Bhagavatar	1888 - 1951
Trivandrum Parameswara Bhagavatar	1888 - 1965
Trivandrum Narayana Bhagavatar	1888 - 1941
Palghat Rama Bhagavatar	1888 - 1957
Tanjore Ramadas Rao	1889
Umayalpuram N. Kodandarama Ayyar	1889 - c. 1975
P.N. Angappa Pillai	1889
Naina Pillai of Kanchipuram	1889 - 1934
Semmangudi Narayanaswami Ayyar	1889 - 1944
Shanmughavadivu	1889
Musiri Subramania Ayyar	1889 - 1975
Nerur Srinivasachariar	1890 - 1950
Salem Doraiswamy Ayyangar	1890 - 1952
Papanasam Sivan	1890 - 1973
Panchakshari Gavai	1890



Ariyakudi Ramanuja Ayyangar	1890 - 1967
Umayalpuram Narayana Ayyar	c. 1890
Kannappa Pillai of Keeranur Bros	1891 - 1944
Parur Sundaram Ayyar	1891 - 1974
T.V. Subba Rao	1891 - 1958
Vibhulananda Swamigal	1892 - 1949
Chikka Rama Rao	1892 - 1946
Chittoor Subramania Bhattar	1893
Sakkottai Rangu Ayyangar	1893
T.L. Venkatrama Ayyar	1893
Cheranmahadevi Subramania Sastri	1893
Dwaram Venkataswamy Naidu	1893 - 1964
Valadi Krishna Ayyar	1893 - 1950
Mayavaram Viswanatha Sastri	1893 - 1958
Tanjore Narayanaswami Appa	c. 1893
Seithur Sundaresa Bhattar	1893
R. Ananatakrisna Sarma	1893
Needamangalam Meenakshisundaram Pillai	1894 - 1949
Budalur Krishnamurti Sastrigal	1894
Palghat Subba Ayyar	1894
C. Saraswathi Bai	1894
B. Subba Rao	1894 - 1975
Tanjore Vaidyanatha Ayyar	1894
T.K. Jayarama Ayyar	1894
Nagaswami Bhagavatar	1894 - 1952
Ghatam Mani Ayyar	1895
T. Chowdiah	1895 - 1967
Tiruvizhimalalai Subramania Pillai	1895
N. Chennakesaviah	1895 - 1984
Chilakalapudi Venkateswara Sarma	1895
Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar	1896
Maharajapuram Viswanatha Ayyar	1896 - 1970
M. Ramalinga Bhagavathar	1896
Harmonium Subramania Dikshitar	1896 - 1981
Keeranur Chinnathambi Pillai	1897 - 1942
Mudicondan C. Venkatarama Ayyar	1897 - 1975
Yoga Narasimhan	1897 - 1971
E. Krishna Ayyar	1897 - 1968
T.N. Rajarathinam Pillai	1898 - 1956
Kumbakonam Rajamanickam Pillai	1898 - 1970
Chittoor Subramania Pillai	1898
V.V. Narasimhachariar	1898
Tiruppamburam Swaminatha Pillai	1898 - 1961
B. Devendrappa	1899
Vidyala Narasimhalu Naidu	1899
Annaswami Sastri	1899
Desamangalam Subramania Ayyar	1899 - 1947
P.I. Natesa Pillai	1899
Harmonium Arunachalappa	1899 - 1966

Andavan Pichai	1899 - 1990
A.M. Chinnaswami Mudaliar	c. 1900
Mangudi R. Dorairaja Ayyar	1900 - 1980
Pudukottai Narayanaswami Ayyar	c. 1900
Muthialpet Ponnuswami Pillai	c. 1900
Woraiyur Ramaswami Pillai	c. 1900
Patrayani Sitarama Sastri	1900 - 1957
Lalgudi V.R. Gopala Ayyar	1900 - 1979
B.S. Raja Ayyangar	1900 - 1980
Dharmapuri Subbarayar	c. 1900
Tiruvarur (Kunju) Rajagopalayyar	1900 - 1971
Tinniam Venkatarama Ayyar	1900
Karur Chinnaswami Ayyar	c. 1900 - 1966
Tiruvarur Rajayee	1900 - 1925
Tiruvizhimalalai Natarajasundaram Pillai	1900

### Other Artistes of 19th Century :

Adimurti Ayyar	Akhilswamy
Ambhayiram	Anai & Ayya Brothers
Anantachariar	Annachi Ayyar
Athmanadha Bhagavatar	Ayya Bhagavatar
Ayyaswami	Brahmananda Paradesi
Pallavi Bhimachar	Polagam Chidambara Ayyar
Mazhavañ Chidambara Bharati	Nagaswaram Dasari
Dakshinamurti Sastri	Duraiswami Ayyar @ Panchanada Ayyar
Girisa Ayyar, Visalur	Keeranur Govinda Pillai
Govinda Sivan,	Sabhpathi Sivan
Guruyacharyulu	Jagannatha Bhatgoswamy
Kadigai Pulavars	Kamakoti Sastri
Tsallagalli Krishna Ayyar	Umayalpuram Krishna Bhagavatar
Umayalpuram Sundara Bhagavatar	Kshirabdi Sastri
Lavani Venkata Rao	Pudukottai Manpoondia Pillai
Photo Masilamani Mudaliar	Dolak Nannu Miya
Kumbakonam Natesa Dikshitar	Parur Pappu Pillai
Veenai Perumalayya	Ramanujachariar
Ramudu Bhagavatar	Muvanallur Sabhapattayya
Mysore Sadasiva Rao	Tiruvidadimarudur Sakharama Rao
Pudukottai Seshachala Bhagavatar	Jhenjahmrutham Subba Ayyar
Mooguru Subbanna	Kilikanni Subburayaswami
Bikshandarkoil Subbarayar	Shermadevi Sundaram Ayyar
Kottayur Sivakozhundu Desikhar	Peria Vaithi
Chinna Vaithi	Dwaram Venkatakrishniah
Veena Varahappa Ayyar	Pandanallur Veeraswami
Kothavasal Venkatarama Ayyar	Kundrakudi Venkatarama Ayyar
Melattur Venkatramana Sastri	Manambuchavadi Venkatasubba Ayyar

R. Rangaramanuja Ayyangar	1901 - 1980
Papa Venkataramiah	1901 - 1972
M. Cheluvayaswami	1901 - 1988
Karaikudi Muthu Ayyar	1901
Prof. P. Sambamurti Ayyar	1901 - 1973
P.S. Veeruswami Pillai	1901 - 1973
Ghatam Vilvadri Ayyar	1901
Dr. T.S. Ramakrishnan	1902
T.N.C. Venkatanarayanacharyulu	1902
Varahur Muthuswamy Ayyar	1902
Titte Krishna Ayyangar	1902
Injikudi Picchaikannu Pillai	1903 - 1975
Mariappaswami	1903
Kalidas N. Nilakanta Ayyar	1903
Rukmini Devi Arundale	1904 - 1986
Maruthuvakudi S. Rajagopala Ayyar	1904
Madurai Srirangam Ayyangar	1904
D. Subbaramayya	1904
T. Venkata Rao	1905
Devakkottai Narayana Ayyangar	1905 - 1987
Illuppur Panchami	1905 - 1935
Nori Nagabhushanam Pantulu	1905 - 1984
Thuraiyur Rajagopala Sarma	1905 - 1987
Palladam K. Nagaraja Rao	1905
S.G. Kittappa	1906 - 1933
T.N. Ramaswami Sastri	1906 - 1985 c.
K.S. Narayana Ayyangar	1906 - 1959
H. Ramachandra Sastri	1906 - 1992
M. Kanakasabhai Pillai	1906
Dr. Thiruvankadu Subramaniam Pillai	1906
Erode Viswanatha Ayyar	1906
Chidambaram S. Radhakrishna Pillai	1906
Kirupananda Variar, Tirumuruga	1906
V.S. Gomatisankara Ayyar	1907
Achalpuram K. Kasinatha Desikhar	1907
D. Seshappa	1907
K.B. Sundarambal	1907 - 1980
Savitri Rajan	1908 - 1991
M.M. Dandapani Desikhar	1908 - 1972
Tiruchaikadu T. Sambandam Pillai	1908
Kolanka Venkataraju	1908
Dr. V. Raghavan	1908 - 1979
Dr. P. Periaswami (Thooran)	1908
C.S. Sankara Sivam	1908
Semmangudi Dr. R. Srinivasa Ayyar	1908
L.S. Narayanaswamy Bhagavatar	1908 - 1970
Ratnagiri Subba Sastri	1909
T.S. Krishnaswamy	1909
Palani Subramania Pillai	1909 - 1962

Embar S. Vijayaraghavachariar	1909 - 1991
Kalakad S. Ramanarayana Ayyar	1910 - 1992
Trichy Swaminatha Ayyar	1910
M.K. Kalyanakrishna Bhagavatar	1910
G.N. Balasubramaniam	1910 - 1965
Kumbakonam Gopala Ayyar	1910
T. Puttaswamayya	1910
A. Narayana Ayyar	1911 - 1990
Neelamma Kadambi	1911
Mahadevu Radhakrishna Raju	1911
K. Sankaranarayana Panicker	1911
T. Subbiah Desikhar	1911
T.K. Rangachari	1912 - 1979
Alathur Srinivasa Ayyar	1912 - 1980
Mayavaram Govindaraja Pillai	1912
Banni Bai	1912
Alangudi K. Ramachandran	1912
Johannes T.C.R. (Yogi Sundararajan)	1912 c
Sankaran̄koil A. Tirugnana Sambanda Odhuvar	1912
T. Brinda	1912
* Madurai Mani Ayyar	1912 - 1968
Palghat Mani Ayyar	1912 - 1981
Ramnad Eswaran	1913 - 1985
P.K. Rajagopala Ayyar	1913 - 1990
M.A. Kalyanakrishna Bhagavatar	1913 - 1979
Bangalore B. Channamma	1913
T.S. Parthasarathy	1913
Dr. S. Pinakapani	1913
K.P. Kittappa	1913
Tanjore T.T. Sankara Ayyar	1913
A. Subramaniam	1913
K.C. Thiagarajan	1913
Kallidaikurichi A. Sundaram Ayyar	1913 - 1974.
M.L. Veerabhadriah	1914 - 1989
K.S. Dhanammal	1914
M.S. Chandrasekhariah	1914
Chidambaram C.S. Kumaraswami Pillai	1914
K.S. Narayanaswami Ayyar	1914
Trichy S. Raghava Ayyar	1914
V. Anantarama Ayyar	1914
N.S. Krishnaswami Ayyangar	1914
T. Muktha	1914
C.S. Murugabhupathy	1914
Valangaiman Shanmughasundaram Pillai	1914
Terazhandur T.V. Srinivasachari	1914
K.S. Krishnamurti	1914
P. Balakrishnan	1914
Puttaraja Gavai	1914
S.R. Kuppuswami	1914
* Mannargudi Sambasiva Bhagavatar	1912

R.P. Dasaratharaman	1915
V. Govindasami Naicker	1915
C. Honnappa Bhagavata	1915 - 1992
Palghat V.A. Ramachandran	c. 1915
Prof. V.V. Sadagopan	1915
Karantnai R. Shanmugham Pillai	1915
Dr. Alamelu Govindarajan	1915 - 1988
Dr. Vinjamuri Varadaraja Ayyangar	1915 - 1991
R. Chandrasekhariah	1915
Chellapillai Iyengar	1915
P. Kalinga Rao	1915
Vaiyapuri Devar	1916
R.N. Doreswamy	1916
Nagercoil S. Harihara Ayyar	1916
A. S. Panchapakesa Ayyar	1916
B.V.K. Sastri	1916
P. Sivavadiivelu Pillai	1916
Dr. M.S. Subbulakshmi	1916
T.S. Vembu Ayyar	1916
Pallavi S. Chandrappa	1916 - 1986
R.V. Pakkiriswamy	1916 - 1989
V. Sethuramiah	1916 - 1986
Alathur Sivasubramania Ayyar	1916 - 1965
R. R. Keshavamurty	1916
Chintlapatti Ramachandra Rao	1916
Prof. S. Kalpakam	1917
T.R. Ramu Pillai	1917
G.N. Dandapani	1917
Srivanjiam Ramachandra Ayyar	1917
Dr. S. Ramanathan	1917 - 1985
Prof. V. Ramanathan	1917
Tanjore K.P. Sivanandham	1917
P.R. Sundar Rajan	1917
S. Thathachariar	1917
T. Balasaraswati	1918 - 1984
S. Ambhujam	1918 - 1989
T.S. Balakrishna Sastrigal	1918
K.R. Ganapati	1918
Sandhyavandhanam Srinivasa Rao	1918
V. Venkatasubba Rao	1918 - 1989
A. Vinayaka Mudaliar	1918
C. Kalyanasundaram	1918
P. Bhuvanaswamayya	1918
T.R. Krishnamurty	1918
V. Venkatasubba Rao	1918
Pithukuli Murugadas	1918
Maharajah Jaya Chamarajah Wodeyar	1919 - 1974
Dr. S. Venkatasubramonia Ayyar	1919 - 1984
M.A. Narasimhachar	1919

D.K. Pattammal	1919
N. Muthukrishna Ayyar	1919
S. Rajam	1919
T.K. Radhakrishnan	1919
Tiruvizhimalalai S. Govindaraja Pillai	1919
K. Srinivasa Ayyangar	1919 - 1979
Madurai Dr. S. Somasundaram	1919 - 1989
M. Narayanaswamy Ayyar	1919
Vedaranyam V. Somasundaram	1919
Vidyasankar	1919
Mavelikara Krishnamurty Nair	1920 - 1988
R.K. Srikantan	1920
Cuddalore M. Subramaniam	1920
Mysore Dr. Doreswami Iyengar	1920
Kuttalam Viswanatha Ayyar	1920
Madras A. Kannan	1920
R. Pichumani	1920
Coimbatore N. Ramaswami	1920
V. Srikanta Ayyar	1920
Tirumalai Srinivasachariar	1920
M.V. Varahaswami	1920
Manchella Jagannatha Rao	1921 - 1985
K.S. Manjunathan	1921 - 1989
Karukurichi Arunachalam	1921 - 1964
Nagore T.S. Ambi Ayyar	1921 - 1991
B.V. Raman & B.V. Lakshman	1921
N. Kesi	1921
P.V. Ganesa Ayyar	c. 1921
Veenai Sesha Ayyar	1921
Swarna Venkatesa Dikshitar	1921
Needamangalam Krishnamoorthy Bhagavatar	1921 - 1982
Kanchana Venkatasubramanyam	1921
M.R. Doraiswamy	1922
Emani Sankara Sastri	1922 - 1987
Kamala Thiagarajan	1922
B. Rajam Ayyar	1922
Tiruvallur B. Subramaniam	1922
Gomati Viswanathan	1922
Kalpakam Swaminathan	1922
T.R. Navaneetham	1922
M.R. Sankaramurty	1922
M. S. Ramayya	1922
Puducode Krishnamurty	1923 - 1985
M.D. Ramanathan	1923 - 1984
Nallan Chakravartulu Krishnamacharyulu	1923
K.V. Narayanaswami	1923
P. Swaminathan	1923
T.M. Theagarajan	1923
Tiruvizhimalalai S. Dakshinamoorthy Pillai	1923

K.V. Kanthamani	1923
A. Subba Rao	1923
Srirangam R. Kannan	1924 - 1988
Sundaraja (Parvati Srinivasan)	1924 - 1989
Parur S. Anantaraman	1924
V. Desikachar	1924
Valliyur R. Gurumurti	1924
Srirangam V.S. Krishnamoorti Rao	1924
Dr. T.K. Murthy	1924
Saidai T. Natarasan	1924
Kanchipuram S. Srinivasa Odhuvar	1924
Harikesanallur M. Vaidyalingam	1924
Vattipalli Dr. Krishnamurti	1924
Dr. Namagiripettai Krishnan	1924
D.S. Rajappa	1924
Tanjore Sankara Ayyar	1924
M.J. Srinivasa Ayyangar	1924
Ramnad Krishnan	1925 - 1974
Kandadevi S. Alagiriswamy	1925
Dr. T.V. Kuppuswamy	1925
Chalakudi Dr. N.S. Narayanaswamy	1925
H.P. Ramachar	1925
Dr. V.S. Sampathkumaracharya	1925
K.R. Chandramouli	1925
P.S. Lakshmi	1925
S. Rajaram	1925
Mylattur S. Ramachandran	1925
Tiruvarur S. Balasubramanian	1925
Anayampatti S. Dandapani	1926 - 1984
T.R. Mahalingam (Mali)	1926 - 1986
V. Balakrishnan	1926
Ramnad M.N. Kandaswamy	1926
Dr. R. Satyanarayana	1926
Mookapatti Nageswara Rao	1926
Annavarupu Ramaswamy	1926
Kuzhikarai S.P. Viswalingam	1926
T. Viswanathan	1926
M. Ramasubramania Sarma	1926
Hymavati Tyagarajan	1926
R.K. Suryanarayana	1926
K.N. Krishnamurty	1926
Nedunuri Krishnamurti	1927
N. Krishnaswamy Chettiar	1927
Dr. Ranganayaki Ayyangar	1927
Mythili Srinivasan	1927
A.M. Sambandamurti Odhuvar	1927
T.A. Thiagaraja Desikhar	1927
V. Thiagarajan	1927
Dr. S. Balachander, Veena	1927 - 1990

Nachiarkoil N.K. Rajam Pillai	1927
Dr. M.L. Vasanthakumari	1928 - 1990
Voleti Venkateshwarulu	1928 - 1989
K.V. Krishnan	1928
Madurai N. Krishnan	1928
Prof. R.V. Krishnan	1928
A.K. Muthukumaraswamy	1928
C.V. Parthasarathy	1928
Maharajapuram V. Santhanam	1928 - 1992
M.P.N. Sethuraman	1928
K.M. Vaidyanathan	1928
Prof. S. R. Janakiraman	1928
Prof. T.N. Krishnan	1928
Palghat R. Raghu	1928
Vairamangalam Lakshminarayanan	1928
Prof. Rajalakshmi Narayanan	1928
T.R. Srinivasan	1928
Papanasam Balasaraswati	1928
H.V. Krishnamurti	1928
D.K. Jayaraman	1928 - 1991
Salem D. Chellam Ayyangar	1929
Maharajapuram K. Nagarajan	1929
Umayalpuram K. Narāyanaswamy	1929
M. S. Ponnuthai	1929
Vellore Ramabhadran	1929
Rukmani Venkatachalam	1929
T.K. Govinda Rao	1929
A. Srinivasaraghavan	1929
T.R. Subramanyam	1929
V. Nagarajan	1930
Mysore M. Nagaraj	1930
Tanjore S. Kalyanaraman	1930
Sikkil Kunjumani	1930
Mani Krishnaswami	1930
Melattur A.P. Natesa Ayyar	1930
Dr. S. Seetha	1930
Tiruvarur S. Sethuraman	1930
P.P. Somayajulu	1930
Lalgudi G. Jayaraman	1930
Janaki Subramaniam	1930
Tirupanandal S. Veeraraghavan	1930
Parur R. Venkataraman	1930
Dr. M. Balamurali Krishna	1930
Madurai M. Balasubramaniam	1931
M. S. Gopalakrishnan	1931
Sirkali Jayaraman	1931
V. Lalitha	1931
A.K. C. Natarajan	1931
Prof. D. Pasupati	1931



Prof. R. Visweswaran	1931
V.K. Venkataramanujam	1931
M. V. Ramanamurty	1932 - 1990
Anayampatti S. Ganesan	1932
T.V. Gopalakrishnan	1932
P. Harihara Ayyar	1932
Dr. Salem S. Jayalakshmi	1932
Pasupatikoil Kamalamurti	1932
B. Krishnamurti	1932
Ranganayaki Rajagopalan	1932
Polagam A.K. Sambasivam	1932
T.S. Sankaran (Flautist)	1932
Saroja Soundararajan	1932
A. Sundaresan	1932
Allam Koteeswara Rao	1933
Sirkazhi Dr. S. Govindarajan	1933 - 1988
Krishnan Odhuvar	1933
Adyar K. Lakshmanan	1933
G. Ramamurti Bhagavata	1933
Sembanarkoil S.R.D. Muthukumaraswamy	1933
M.P.N. Ponnuswami	1933
Tirupanthuruthi V. Venkatesan	1933
Bellary Venkatesh	1933
C. Krishnamurti	1934
P.S. Narayanaswamy	1934
Dr. N. Ramani	1934
P. Surya Rao	1934
T.P. Vaidyanathan	1934
Bangalore V. Venkataram	1934
Radha Viswanathan	1934
Thanjavur Upendran	1934 - 1991
Dwaram Mangathayaru	1935
P.T. Chelladurai	1935
Guruvayur Dorai	1935
Lalitha Seshadri	1935
P. Leela	1935
S.R.D. Vaidyanathan	1935
Parvathavarthini Balasubramanian	1935
Umayalpuram K. Sivaraman	1935
Kunnakudi R. Vaidyanathan	1935
Dr. M.B. Vedavalli	1935
K. Veerabhadra Rao	1935
M.S. Subramaniam	1935
B.M. Sundaram	1935
R. Vedavalli	1935
A.V. Unnikrishnan	1935
Bellary Seshagiri	1935
Prof. Gowri Kuppuswami	1935
Sikkil R. Bhaskaran	1936

Dr. Chitti Babu	1936
Kalyani Sharma	1936
T. Rukmani	1936
K. Veeramani	1936 - 1990
Papa Chudamani	1936 - 1978
Jaya Pasupati	1937 - 1991
T.R. Balamani	1937
M. Chandrasekharan	1937
Tiruvizha Jayasankar	1937
K.G. Kanakalakshmi	1937
Sadhuram Swamigal	1937
Tirupamburam Dr. S. Shanmugasundaram	1937
R.K. Suryanarayana	1937
T.R. Balamani	1937
Mangalam Muthuswamy	1937
Indira Srinivasan	1938
Ettukudi V. Jayaraman	1938
Meera Seshadri	1938
Prema Hariharan	1938
Pudukottai R. Ramanathan	1938
Shanta Narasimhan	1938
John Higgins	1939 - 1984
Rajeswari Padmanabhan	1939
Dr. Rukmani Ramani	1939
N.C. Sundaravalli	1939
Dr. S.A.K. Durga	1940
Palani S. Lakshminarasimha Ayyar	1940
Sikkil Neela	1940
Denkanikottah R. Muniratnam	1940
Trichur V. Ramachandran	1940
Valayapatti A.R. Subramaniam	1940
Dr. K.J. Yesudas	1940
Thulaseevanam	1940



### ACHIEVEMENTS

- i Komanduri Seshagiri, Violinist, performed a 24-hour yagna of nadopasana with the songs of Tyagaraja alone.
- ii Yella Venkateshwara Rao, Mridangist, set up a world record of non-stop mridangam play spanning 26.5 hours.
- iii G. Sridhar gave a 24-hour flute recital at the Madhava Perumal temple, Madras.

## D

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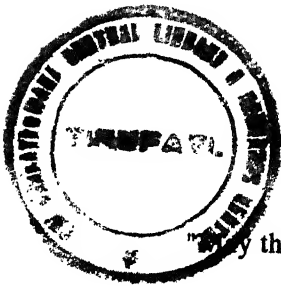
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May there be victorious Mangala; ever auspicious Mangala,  
To the Lord who is benevolent  
To the whole world ... who honours merit ... "

— Karunarasakshaya ( Ghanta ) of Tyagaraja.

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